Ministry of Foreign Affairs

*IOB Evaluation*

# Evaluation of the MDG3 Fund

*'Investing in Equality' (2008-2011)*

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# Preface

In the course of 2007, a series of country-wide consultations were held on the future of Dutch development cooperation. These culminated in the so-called Schokland agreements, Schokland referring to the first UNESCO World Heritage Site in the Netherlands, where the agreements were signed.

One of these agreements reflected the recognition that abolishing the stand-alone budget for women's rights and gender equality in the early years of the new Millennium had not been a wise decision. Amidst increasing conservative opposition that was threatening what they had fought over for years, women's organisations in developing countries had seen their resources decline at a time when realisation of MDG3 concerning gender equality was seriously lagging behind. Moreover, gender mainstreaming was not living up to its promises.

Against this background, the minister for Development Cooperation decided to introduce the MDG3 Fund with the ambitious aim of realising concrete improvements in rights and opportunities for women and girls in developing countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

This evaluation informs on how the MDG3 Fund has been put into practice and what is known of its results. It was conducted by senior evaluator Paul de Nooijer and policy researcher Kirsten Mastwijk from the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands in collaboration with ACE Europe, a consultancy company based in Belgium. IOB conducted the field visit to Mozambique together with local consultant Kátia Taela, and ACE Europe was responsible for the field visits to Egypt and Bangladesh, supported by the local consultants Samah Said Helmy and Dr. Zobaida Akhter. Document analysis of the seventeen projects was divided between IOB and ACE Europe.



An external reference group and an IOB peer review team, both chaired by myself, ensured the quality of the evaluation. The members of the external reference group were Mirjam Krijnen (Head of the Task Force Women's Rights and Gender Equality, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), Wendy Janssens (Amsterdam Institute for International Development, Vrije Universiteit), Marleen Dekker (Africa Study Centre, Leiden University) and Serena Cruz (Social Research and Gender Consultant, SCT – Development Solutions International). IOB inspectors Marijke Stegeman and Margret Verwijk took care of the internal peer review.

IOB hopes that the report will play a role in policy-making on the follow-up to the current Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women programme (FLOW) that has been the successor of the MDG3 Fund since 2012.

Final responsibility for the report rests with IOB.

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# List of abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| ACM | Asociación Coordinadora de la Mujer |
| ASMA | American Society for Muslim Advancement |
| AWDF | African Women Development Fund |
| AWID | Association for Women's Rights in Development |
| CEDAW | Convention to Eliminate all forms of Discrimination Against Women |
| CREA | Creating Resources for Empowerment and Action |
| CSO | Civil Society Organisation |
| GBV | Gender Based Violence |
| Isis-WICCE | Isis Women's Cross Cultural Exchange |
| ITUC | International Trade Union Confederation |
| FLOW | Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goal |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NIZA | Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa |
| OTM | Organização dos Trabalhadores de Moçambique |
| PwC | PriceWaterhouseCoopers |
| SafAIDS | Southern Africa HIV and aids Information Dissemination Service |
| UAF | Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights |
| UNSCR | United Nations Security Council Resolution |
| WANEP | West Africa Network for Peacebuilding |
| WIEGO | Women in Informal Employment: Globalisation and Organizing |
| WLP | Women's Learning Partnership |

# Main findings and lessons learned

## Set-up and characteristics of the Fund

This evaluation concerns the 'MDG3 Fund: Investing in Equality' of the Netherlands ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Fund was introduced in 2008 against a background of declining funding for women's organisations in developing countries and slow progress in realizing the Millennium Development Goal that deals with promoting gender equality and empowerment of women (MDG3).

The Fund's aim was to bring about improvements in gender equality and to empower women, focusing on four themes: securing property and inheritance rights for women, promoting employment and equal employment opportunities, increasing women's participation in politics and public administration and stopping violence against women.

In its design of the Fund, the ministry adopted a project approach but without a clear overall programme strategy (currently referred to as 'theory of change') of what milestones would be needed to realise the overall objective of realising '*concrete improvements in rights and opportunities for women and girls in developing countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia*'.

The launch of the Fund was met with great interest, as proven by the 450+ applications submitted. This prompted the ministry to increase the Fund's budget from an initial EUR 50 million to EUR 70 million for the period 2008-2011. This was topped up with an additional EUR 7 million to reach a total of EUR 77 million in 2011 when it was also decided to extend its lifetime to the end of 2011.



The Fund was an important source of income for the 45 projects that were in the end selected after a comprehensive selection process. The characteristics of this portfolio of 45 projects are in line with the ministry's preferences:

- 35 were multi-country projects; 10 of them were even implemented in more than 20 countries or at a global level. About one third of the projects covered former and current Dutch aid partner countries while 11 were (also) active in fragile states;
- Most of the grantees were larger, well-established organisations like women funds, international networks and international NGOs. Over two-thirds of the grantees were from Southern countries. The choice for women funds allowed reaching smaller civil society and community-based organisations through different types of re-granting. It is however unknown how many organisations have actually benefited from the MDG3 Fund in the end;
- With few exceptions, most projects operated within the Fund's four priority themes, with 75% of them focusing on combating gender-based violence, often in combination with the second priority of women's political participation. What is more, over 55% of the projects covered more than one theme. The more 'economic' priority themes of employment and property rights were less frequently covered;
- Final beneficiaries included many different types of marginalised women and girls, though actual numbers are unknown. They were at times reached through an intervention chain that could be long and involve multiple channels, i.e. the grantee, its implementing partners and local civil society or community-based organisations that were supported either directly by the grantee or via the implementing partners.

Projects have operated with a broad range of civil society organisations as well the media, universities and research institutions. Collaboration with parliament and political parties occurred less frequent. At the same time, the assumption that the Fund would enhance cooperation between women's organisations and thus realise a bigger impact by linking the different priority areas has not materialised (except for those that were already collaborating already before joining the Fund). There was also little collaboration or alignment with projects supported by the Dutch embassies.

Looking at the types of activities financed by the Fund, 80% of the projects undertook policy influencing, lobby and advocacy. This included activities such as conducting research, organising conferences, strengthening advocacy oriented networks and alliances and investing in awareness raising. These activities targeted the general public, specific target groups and/or government institutions. Strengthening lobby and advocacy capacities of implementing partners and/or beneficiary organisations was often part of the project intervention strategies.

## Effectiveness, sustainability and efficiency



The evaluation set out to address the OEC/DAC criteria of effectiveness, sustainability and efficiency. In doing so, several methodological challenges were encountered. These prompt the reader to treat the data presented in this report carefully and to accept that the results presented are primarily illustrative. The methodological challenges are related to the following. First of all, the ministry opted for a 'monitoring light' approach. Secondly, in line with international agreements on effective donor support (Paris (2005) and Accra (2008)), no monitoring framework was imposed based on the assumption that the MDG3 Fund grantees would have sufficiently sound M&E systems. In practice, however, these systems provided data only at activity and output level. Sufficiently reliable evaluations done by the grantees were rare. This evaluation was not able to fill the resulting data caveat. It could only provide information that could be verified during interviews and short field visits at country level. As a consequence, information on outcomes and their contribution to women's empowerment is anecdotal; impact evaluation was not possible.

### Effectiveness

Most projects have contributed to putting gender issues on the the agenda – both at different levels of government, civil society and community-based organisations, trade unions and/or among the public at large. A variety of lobby and advocacy activities of variable intensity and scope, aiming at different target groups, and using a range of media have been instrumental in this respect. The evaluation shows that they have contributed to changes in the enabling environment in areas, such as (i) improvements in legal frameworks concerning gender-based violence and government taking more action to implement them; and (ii) in relation to employment, the ratification and/or application of international conventions, such as the ILO convention 183 on maternity leave and 189 on domestic work.

The evaluation furthermore shows that in the MDG3 Fund's priority themes, projects have contributed to the following results.

*Gender based violence* – Results include enhanced knowledge and awareness of gender-based violence (GBV) among traditional leaders, government officials and within the communities, among both women and to a lesser extent also men. There is anecdotal evidence of women feeling increasingly empowered because of the knowledge they gained on their rights and what to do in case of violation of these rights, and of women feeling more confident to speak out against GBV. Still, in many cases, it remains difficult for women to actually do so. It is moreover clear that increased knowledge is only slowly changing attitudes and, ultimately, behaviour, particularly among men. GBV continues to be rampant in many countries. While projects have enhanced the watchdog role of local civil society organisations in terms of monitoring the (lack of) state response to GBV, little was done to address this issue of state responsiveness. The evaluation finally shows that results were more positive when intensive and longer-term multi-media campaigns were combined with individual and community dialogues.

*Political participation* – There is increased awareness and acceptance of the role of women as political actors among the general public. Awareness raising and civic education programmes have provided women with knowledge on their rights and how (local) government operates. They have enabled women to acquire leadership skills and made them more confident. They also contributed to women's participation in election campaigns, both as voters and as candidates. The evaluation has found enhanced women's presence and emerging female leadership in local governance bodies. However, the same cannot be said for political participation and leadership at the level of national parliaments. Moreover, meaningful participation of women in decision-making remains challenged in many places: women have to deal with the opposition from within these male-dominated structures and only few projects have invested in supporting women once they were elected. Collaboration with political parties was the exception while the claimed link between increased female political participation and policy outcomes in favour of female preferred public goods and services is never substantiated with evidence.



*Employment* – There is evidence of increased awareness of women worker's and employment issues and needs among labour oriented organisations, trade unions and among policy makers. However, it is unclear whether this has translated into concrete actions and initiatives to promote labour legislation or healthy working conditions, improved service delivery to women or in terms of improvements in women's access to the labour market. At the same time, it is evident that not too much was done in creating employment opportunities or reducing women's responsibilities within the household, often a condition for paid employment.

*Land rights* – While the literature makes clear that for women to effectively acquire land titles a multi-dimensional and multi-stakeholder approach is needed, with the exception of the NIZA project, such an approach was missing. The projects assessed in-depth show only small results in terms of individual women obtaining land titles.

Projects that focused on these more economical themes have also contributed to an increasing number of women organising themselves or joining existing organisations, including trade unions and member-based organisations of domestic workers and workers from the informal sector. They have also promoted the organisation of women to strengthen their claim-making capacity with respect to land rights.

One a more critical note, the evaluation shows that only few projects have effectively made an effort to challenge social norms and cultural practices that form the root causes of women discrimination or to challenge the perceptions of individual men and women on this issue. This observation applies to all four themes: little attention was paid to prevailing social norms and discriminatory practices which permit gender-based violence and allow for a culture of impunity to prevail, restrict women's effective political participation and their access to the labour market, or that prevent them to realise their land and other property rights.

Moreover, support for broader organisational development at the level of partner organisations and final beneficiary organisations was undertaken to only a limited extent. This was also not one of the MDG3 Fund's main priorities. In many cases, as they were considered instrumental for achieving the project results, support for partner and beneficiary organisations focused on their technical capacity to deliver results or services. Also, the limited duration of the projects made it difficult to provide the necessary support. The lack of a more strategic approach can also be observed vis-à-vis the international networks and alliances that were co-financed through the Fund.

## Sustainability



A mixed picture emerges when talking about sustainability. On the one hand, there is the sustainability of the MDG3 Fund grantees. With few exceptions, financial and institutional sustainability was not a major issue for them. They are generally well-developed civil organisations with access to a variety of donors, including Dutch NGOs. On the other hand, there is the sustainability at the level of the implementing partner organisations and beneficiary institutions. Here, both institutional and financial sustainability remain weak, in most cases because of the absence of clear capacity development strategies, the short timeframe available for such capacity development as well as the persistent difficulties in getting access to finances. It is unlikely that the majority of these small civil society and community-based organisations will continue implementing the project interventions after funding has stopped. In almost all projects, socio-cultural sustainability of the 'changed discourse' and 'changed attitudes' is at risk, although possibly less so for projects that did not only involve community volunteers, but also trained and involved 'professionals' such as teachers, public officials, lawyers, journalists, religious leaders, etc. There is also doubt about the continued functioning of the networks that were established during the implementation of the MDG3 Fund.

## Efficiency

Management of the MDG3 Fund was outsourced to a consortium of PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and Femconsult. It was done efficiently and within the boundaries of the consortium's contract with the ministry of Foreign Affairs. Management was however strongly focused on financial and administrative follow-up of the projects, rather than on the individual project's contents. Outsourcing was justified given the lack of staff within the ministry of Foreign Affairs to effectively run such a Fund. However, on a more critical note, outsourcing has hampered the build-up of a knowledge base within the ministry, and the development of relationships between the ministry, both in The Hague and at embassy level, with the many organisations that have received money from the MDG3 Fund.

Overall, M&E is one of the weaker features of the MDG3 Fund. The choice for a 'monitoring light' set-up was based upon the assumption that grantees would be able to deliver reliable data at output and outcome level. However, as observed above, this assumption proved to be incorrect in many cases.

Most MDG3 Fund grantees have implemented their activities as envisaged and deviations from the original plans were usually small and well accounted for. Nevertheless, efficiency is a clear concern for ten of the seventeen projects that were assessed in-depth. Reasons underlying this issue are insufficient project design, poor balance between input, output and outreach, and a lack of cooperation with other stakeholders. Furthermore, most projects have had relatively high overheads; these are explained by a preference for multi-country programmes – as promoted in the Fund's conception – that were centrally run, in combination with insufficient attention for introducing the necessary management mechanisms that such programmes require. In some projects outreach was too limited to justify the high overhead costs.

That over 50% of the projects have re-granted part of their MDG3 Fund budget has not influenced project efficiency. Among both re-granters and organisations that did not re-grant there were cases of weak project management and implementation. In general, re-granting was efficient for those grantees that already had a proper system – operating through calls for proposals – to manage such grants, and therefore were able to reach out to many smaller civil society organisations.



## Lessons learned and considerations for the future

*The complexity of realising gains in gender equality requires longer-term and multi-dimensional interventions*
A stand-alone facility for organisations fighting for equal rights and opportunities for women and girls remains necessary. Gender inequality continues to be high in many countries, and equality gains that women have fought for decades are under threat in an increasing number of countries. However, realising effective change in the area of women's rights and gender equality is extremely complex, context specific and requires the involvement of formal and informal institutions and organisations, government and civil society and both women and men. It asks for long-term, multi-dimensional efforts that take into account the context specific drivers and opportunities for change that can be identified in all priority themes of the MDG3 Fund.

*Continued funding demands strategic choices*
The evaluation points at certain pertinent issues that can be considered in the design of a future stand-alone facility for women's rights and gender equality. These relate in particular to:

- *Realism* – When talking about objectives, realism in setting milestones is called for, knowing that the realisation of equal rights and opportunities for women requires long-term and multi-dimensional processes, that are often non-linear and that exceed the usual three-year lifetime of a donor fund. Consequently, a new funding facility should

be realistic in terms of what can be accomplished in limited timeframes. It should also be based on a realistic theory of change with clear (intermediary) milestones that are linked to the ultimate goal of gender equality.

- *Geographical scope* – A choice is needed whether to (i) maintain a global perspective, which has implications for management and overheads when incorporated into project design and a spread of activities that are likely more difficult to monitor, or (ii) to make strategic choices with respect to eligible countries, taking into account bilateral aid policies, the presence of Dutch embassies and what other bilateral and multilateral organisations are financing.

- *Added value* – It is also important to determine in this respect the added value of a stand-alone facility especially in relation to what the Dutch NGOs are planning as part of their new partnerships with the ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- *Thematic focus* – Options are to determine the thematic focus centrally and on the basis of what the Netherlands thinks is important, or, instead, to allow for a more flexible approach that takes into account the context specific needs and priorities of the intended beneficiaries: *poor* women in the global South.



- *Types of organisations* – Making sure that smaller, local women's civil society and community based organisations will be able to benefit from resources, instead of funding international organisations that already have a wide donor-basis.

- *Strengthening women's organisations* – Enhancing sustainability at the level of partner organisations in the global South and increased efforts in terms of broader organisational and institutional capacity development, rather than involving these partners only for realizing specific short-term project aims.

- *The cost of partnerships* – Working through partnerships with a large number of implementing organisations in various countries requires sound coordinating and managing mechanisms at the level of the grantee. When these mechanisms are lacking, the partnership between the grantee and the implementing organisations risks becoming less efficient.

- *More attention for monitoring & evaluation at fund and project level* – The need for improved M&E has been identified, especially at the level of outcomes. This calls for a balance between enhanced accountability and a possibility to learn from well-documented approaches on the one hand and the almost historical agreements reached in Paris and in Accra on responsible donorship and alignment with what exists in terms of M&E capacity. Consideration could be given to incorporate strengthening of M&E capacity as a standard principle in all projects.

- *Outsourcing of management* – Outsourcing of the MDG3 Fund management clearly has had its benefits; at the same time, it is has done little in terms of enhancing the ministry's own knowledge base on gender equality and women's rights and in terms of developing its relationships and networks in this field. It is suggested that the pros and cons of different management models are carefully considered.

# 1

# Introduction

## 1.1 Short introduction of the MDG3 Fund

This evaluation concerns the 'MDG3 Fund: Investing in Equality' of the Netherlands ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was introduced in 2008 to finance projects that would contribute to concrete improvements in rights and opportunities for women and girls in developing countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. The Fund's specific aim was 'to bring about improvements in gender equality and to empower women, with the focus on securing property and inheritance rights for women, promoting employment and equal employment opportunities, increasing women's participation in politics and public administration and stopping violence against women'.[1] Priority target groups were women and girls in situations of conflict, and marginalised women and adolescents. They were to be reached through various types of organisations that were operating levels to realise equal rights and opportunities for women and girls.

The MDG3 Fund financed 45 projects with (initial) grants ranging from EUR 750,000 to more than EUR 5 million. Most of the grantees were larger, well-established organisations like women funds, international networks and international NGOs, which in turn often re-granted to smaller local and grassroots' organisations.

The ministry's Gender Unit was budget holder of the Fund while management and monitoring were outsourced to a consortium comprising of PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) and Femconsult.



In the remainder of this chapter, the approach to the evaluation, its theoretical underpinnings and the research instruments used are described.

## 1.2 Evaluation design

### Evaluation purpose, objectives and evaluation questions

The evaluation of the MDG3 Fund has two purposes: first, to assess whether the Fund has realised its specific aim as outlined above and secondly, based on the experiences generated through its implementation and management, to draw lessons that may be relevant to future policy and policy implementation. The evaluation has used the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability and is based on the following main evaluation questions (see Annex 2):

1. What are the key characteristics of the MDG3 Fund portfolio?
2. What were the main problems and target groups that were addressed and were these target groups effectively reached (effectiveness at output level)?
3. What benefits did the MDG3 Fund projects bring to the final beneficiaries and to what extent did the interventions contribute to advancing gender equality (effectiveness at outcome level)?

[1] Order of the Minister for Development Cooperation of 28 February 2008, no. DJZ/BR-0164/08.

4. To what extent have the MDG3 Fund projects been implemented in an efficient manner?
5. What is the institutional and financial capacity and the commitment of the organisations that have received a grant to continue the activities financed under the MDG3 Fund (sustainability)?

## Analytical frameworks

This section presents the main concepts used in this evaluation – gender equality, empowerment, lobby and advocacy – and some of the methodological challenges arising from them.

*Gender equality*

Gender equality can be understood as equal enjoyment by women and men of socially-valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards. Gender equality does not mean that men and women become the same, but that their opportunities and life chances are equal.[2]

*Empowerment*

Empowerment is central to the concept of gender equality and is a term that was introduced in the Beijing Platform for Action of 1995. According to Kabeer, empowerment is a process by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such ability.[3] Power is conceptualised in terms of people's capacity to make strategic life choices and exercise influence. It is furthermore worth recalling that: (i) '(a) woman's level of empowerment will vary, sometimes enormously, according to other criteria such as her class or caste, ethnicity, relative wealth, age, family position, etc.' (Mosedale (2005): 244); (ii) when talking about strategies of empowerment, structural gender inequalities cannot be addressed by individuals alone and that women's organisations and social movements have an important role to play in creating the conditions for change (Kabeer (1999)); and (iii) that context is crucial in both defining and measuring the impact of women's empowerment on development outcomes.



In this evaluation, the concept of empowerment was dissected into three dimensions of empowerment: power to, power within and power with (see table 1). These dimensions were used in the assessment of the projects that were financed from the MDG3 Fund.[4]

2 OECD (1999).
3 Kabeer (1999) and Kabeer (2005).
4 Charlier en Cauberghs (2007).

| Table 1 | Overview of dimensions of empowerment and indicators to assess different aspects of empowerment | |
|---|---|---|
| **Inputs** | **Output** | **Outcome** |
| ***Power to:*** concerns aspects of stronger economic power such as access to and control over income, land, means of production, transport, services. Secondly it concerns enhanced practical knowledge and/or skills, including leadership skills and the ability to analyse and reason as well as the ability to convert such knowledge and skills into concrete action or means. | | |
| Economic means (finance, credit, subsidies, transport, information, etc.). Technical capacity building such as training, coaching, etc.<br>Socio-political means (supporting organisations, networks, lobby and advocacy) to improve access and control over economic means. | Economic benefits for (groups of) women/men.<br>Enhanced technical knowledge and/or skills and application thereof.<br>Conditions for using knowledge and skills.<br>Conditions for access and control of these benefits. | Increased choice in developing economic activities and allocating resources at household level.<br>Possibility of women/men to make more essential choices.[5]<br>Ability to reflect on and discuss gender inequality within the household. |
| ***Power within:*** relates to aspects such as self-confidence and self-image and the ability to make choices concerning one's future. According to Kabeer, this relates to the cognitive aspect of empowerment, which is necessary before anything else can be achieved and critical if women are to bring change in other aspects of their life. | | |
| Types of capacity building such as information and knowledge building, training, coaching, mentoring, support etc. to strengthen self-image, confidence, engagement and action. Socio-political means (self-help groups, peer groups) to discuss and share experience of discrimination and violations of rights. | Improved self-image and self-confidence (individual and collective level).<br>Ability to speak out (individual level) and strengthened capacity of groups of women and men to raise their voice.<br>Strengthened engagement for the own group. | Increased choice in determining one's own future.<br>Increased participation in social and/or political spheres.<br>Contribution to social change in society as a result of engagement of groups of women/men. |
| ***Power with:*** concerns social and political power, the ability to take decisions for one self or for someone else or to influence decision makers and to bear responsibility and to be free in using resources available.[6] | | |
| Facilitating access to (in)formal groups, giving attention to the level of involvement and participation in decision making.<br>Types of capacity building support to groups/ organisations/ networks and supporting lobby and advocacy activities. | Possibility (as an individual) to organise, participate in decision-making.<br>Quality of involvement and participation at community level.<br>Possibility of organisations/ groups/ networks to influence institutions. | New possibilities to engage in society and to stand up for rights. Improved position in community. Meaningful participation in decision making at household level and in social and/or political spheres. Contribution to social change in society. Emergence of female leadership. |



5 This is linked to the ability to judge and interpret information on e.g. (health) services, importance of education, market operations, household level equality between women and men.

6 Mosedale (2005) refers in this respect to 'collective action, recognizing that more can be achieved by a group acting together than by individuals alone' (Mosedale (2005): 250).

*Policy influencing, lobby and advocacy*

A first analysis of the project documents of the MDG3 Fund grantees made clear that most projects were (also) related to policy influencing, lobby and advocacy. They included a range of activities[7] that aimed to influence decision-makers in the public and private sector at international, national and local levels and aimed at contributing to (a) an enabling environment[8] for gender equality and (b) empowerment of women.

As is clear from e.g. Jones (2011), policy influencing can involve four different strategies (see table 2), which are often used in combination. These strategies provided the framework to situate the approach used by the MDG3 Fund grantees and to assess to what extent the MDG3 Fund has contributed to (improved) policy influencing activities.[9]

**Table 2 Typology of influencing activities [10]**

| Strategy | Where?<br>Through what channels? | How?<br>By what means? | Approaches |
|---|---|---|---|
| I. Advice | National and international policy discourses/debates<br>Formal and informal meetings | Research and analysis, dissemination of 'good practice'<br>Evidence-based arguments<br>Providing advisory support<br>Developing and piloting new policy approaches | Collaborate: focus on working together and learning |
| II. Advocacy | Public and political debates in developing countries<br>Public meetings, speeches, presentations | Television, newspapers, radio and other media<br>Public communications and campaigns<br>'Public education', awareness raising | Pressure: aimed at forcing change |
| III. Lobbying | Formal meetings<br>Semi-formal and informal channels<br>Membership and participation in boards and committees | Face-to-face meetings and discussions<br>Relationships and trust<br>Direct incentives and diplomacy | Persuade: focus on associates |
| IV. Activism | Public campaigns | Strikes<br>Rallies and demonstrations<br>Sit inns | Attack: aimed at weakening the target or gaining a better negotiating position |



7 Activities included studies for evidence-based lobby and advocacy, capacity building to strengthen lobby and advocacy capacities of civil society and community based organisations, training of journalists and large media campaigns.

8 The enabling environment is seen as a set of (interrelated) conditions – such as the legal, institutional, fiscal, informational, financial, political, economic, social and cultural norms and values – that impact on the capacity of actors to engage in development processes in a sustained and effective manner with regard to a specific work field or around a specific topic.

9 Policy influencing, lobby and advocacy can be seen as socio-political means referred to in table 1.

10 Adapted from Jones (2011).

In using these concepts, the evaluation was confronted with several methodological challenges:

- The MDG3 Fund projects were characterised by a great variety of intervention logics that comprised many context specific activities and that were difficult to aggregate.
- Context dependency posed a challenge in terms of both consistency and comparability in measurement schemes, even more so because empowerment is considered a process that is difficult to measure unless one is capable of capturing that process in at least two points in time.
- In terms of evaluating policy influencing, lobby and advocacy it was difficult to determine the links between activities and outputs, and changes in policy and actual behaviour. These links are highly complex and anything but 'linear', as they are shaped by a multitude of interacting forces and actors. Consequently, 'outright successes' in terms of achieving the specific changes that were sought, were rare. Moreover, organisations often did not undertake robust M&E of their policy influencing, lobby and advocacy activities.

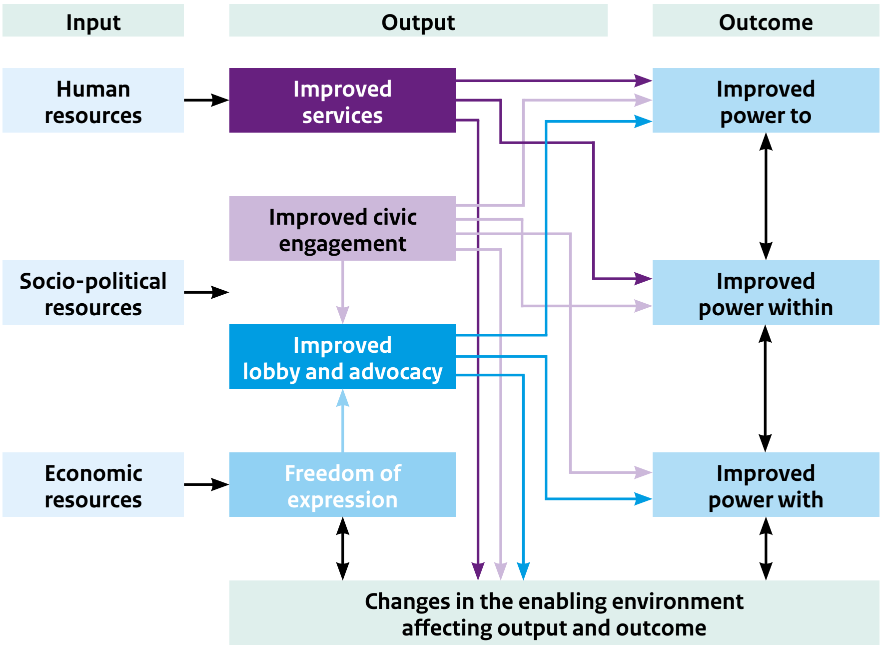
To deal with these challenges, the evaluation has proceeded as follows. First of all, in order to give a consistent view on the results achieved by individual projects, a generic result chain was reconstructed for the Fund in which all interventions could fit. This result chain is captured in figure 1, in which:



- Inputs refer to the resources that were financed by the MDG3 Fund[11];
- Outputs refer to the extent to which policy influencing, lobby and advocacy interventions or service delivery of the MDG3 Fund grantees and/or their implementing partners were strengthened and/or supported.
- Outcomes relate to changes regarding women's empowerment at the level of the final beneficiaries;
- It is reflected that a range of projects envisaged changes in the enabling environment as defined above. This enabling environment influences both output and outcome levels and, vice versa, can be influenced/changed as a result of a specific output and/or outcome.

11 These include e.g. staff salaries, fees for consultants/trainers to give advice, conduct studies, facilitate training (human resources), means to facilitate access to credit, subsidies, transport (economic resources) or funding of policy influencing, lobby and advocacy activities, organisational capacity development, networking (socio-political resources).

**Figure 1** *Reconstructed generic result chain for the MDG3 Fund*






Secondly, to guide the process of data collection and analysis, an evaluation framework was developed, integrating both the evaluation questions and the above analytical schemes and covering the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria mentioned above (see Annex 3).

## Methodology and approach

The evaluation was conducted in three phases:

1. A quick scan of all 45 MDG3 Fund projects to gain insight into how the MDG3 Fund operated.
2. An in-depth analysis of documents and interviews and using a standard reporting format for project level analysis. This analysis sampled 17 projects (equalling some EUR 34.7 million in grants spent, or 45% of the total MDG3 Fund – see table 3).[12] Eight of these projects were also visited in Bangladesh, Egypt, and Mozambique. During field visits two to three days were spent with the sub-grantee, implementing partners and beneficiaries to validate findings of the document analysis and to collect additional information, e.g. on country-specific results.
3. A phase of analysis and reporting.

[12] The following criteria were used in the selection of these 17 projects: (i) cover the four priority areas of the MDG3 Fund; (ii) include different types of organisations receiving a grant (re-granters and direct funders) as well as smaller, medium and bigger projects; (iii) cover various regions and include activities in Egypt, Bangladesh and Mozambique, the focus countries of the overall gender policy evaluation; and (iv) include organisations implementing projects in multiple countries and in one or two countries.

**Table 3 Overview of MDG3 Fund grantees in the sample [10]**

| Grantee | Themes | | | | Type of organisation | | | | | Countries | | | | Re-granting | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | GBV | Political participation | Land rights | Employment | National organisation | Regional organisation | International organisation | International network | Women fund | Total number | Bangladesh | Egypt | Mozambique | Yes | No | Grant effectively spent (EUR million) |
| ACM | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ | | | | | 1 | | | | | ■ | 0.75 |
| ASMA | ■ | ■ | | | | | ■ | | | 10 | ■ | ■ | | | ■ | 1.00 |
| AWDF | ■ | ■ | | | | | | | ■ | 26 | | | | ■ | | 5.57 |
| Breakthrough | ■ | | | | | ■ | | | | 1 | | | | ■ | | 0.97 |
| CREA | ■ | | | | | ■ | | | | 6 | ■ | | | ■ | | 1.21 |
| Gender Links | ■ | | | ■ | | ■ | | | | 13 | | | | | ■ | 1.72 |
| Huairou Commission | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | | | ■ | | * | | | | ■ | | 1.40 |
| Isis-WICCE | ■ | ■ | | | | ■ | | | | 2 | | | | ■ | | 1.16 |
| ITUC | | | | ■ | | | ■ | | | 14 | | | ■ | ■ | | 4.97 |
| NIZA | | ■ | ■ | | | | ■ | | | 5 | | | ■ | | ■ | 3.22 |
| Oxfam GB | ■ | | | | | | ■ | | | 6 | ■ | | | ■ | | 2.30 |
| SafAIDS | ■ | | | | | ■ | | | | 5 | | | ■ | ■ | | 2.74 |
| UAF | ■ | ■ | | | | | | | ■ | 57 | | | ■ | ■ | | 1.15 |
| V-Day Karama | ■ | ■ | | | | ■ | | | | 11 | | ■ | | ■ | | 2.10 |
| WANEP | ■ | ■ | | | | | | ■ | | 34 | | | | ■ | | 1.41 |
| WIEGO | ■ | | | ■ | | | | ■ | | 49 | | | | | ■ | 1.73 |
| WLP | ■ | ■ | | | | | ■ | | | 13 | | ■ | | ■ | | 1.29 |

** Project implemented worldwide.*



13 Annex 6 includes some basic information on these seventeen projects.

## 1.3 Limitations

The evaluation was first of all affected by the fact that monitoring the MDG3 Fund relied only on the existing M&E systems of the individual grantees. The evaluation makes clear that these systems were of variable quality. In many cases, monitoring was only done at activity level and information on outputs and outcomes as reflected in project progress and completion reports was not always reliable. Implications were that it was not always possible to assess e.g. the quality of the lobby and advocacy strategies.

Secondly, only in a few cases was it possible to triangulate information from progress and completion reports with independent evaluations that, according to IOB standards were of sufficient quality.[14] In only two cases were baseline and end line surveys conducted, complemented by additional interviews and focus group discussions with project beneficiaries.

Thirdly, against the above background and given the resources available for this evaluation, it was decided to provide only output data that could be verified and triangulated during interviews and field visits, keeping in mind that short-term field missions can never make up for inadequate M&E systems. Unlike AWID, one of the MDG3 Fund grantees, in its much cited report 'Women Moving Mountains' (see text box 1), the evaluation does not claim to measure any impact of the MDG3 Fund. This was not possible in view of the circumstances described above. All in all, there is a need to treat the data presented in this report carefully and to accept that the results presented are primarily illustrative.



Finally, in most cases it was not possible to separate the MDG3 Fund from other donor contributions, of which there were a considerable number at times, including those from UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against women, some of which had started long before the MDG3 Fund grant was provided. It is therefore not possible to attribute results achieved solely to the MDG3 Fund.

[14] In the assessment, the following criteria were used: independence of the evaluator and sources consulted, description of methodology for data collection and analysis available, information on representativeness of sample and ability to generalise findings and conclusions, contains assessment of sustainability, clear analysis and conclusions, presents information on number of persons and organisations reached, information on outcome level. Evaluations were judged to be of good quality in the case of the following projects: Breakthrough, Oxfam GB and WIEGO. Their quality was considered to be questionable in 5 cases (AWDF, CREA, Isis-WICCE, NIZA, and WLP). The quality of the evaluations was insufficient for 6 projects (ACM, Gender Links, Huairou Commission, ITUC, UAF, and WANEP). For 3 projects (ASMA, Safaids and V-Day Karama) no evaluation reports are available.

**Text box 1** *AWID's report 'Women moving mountains' (2013)*

In 2013 the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), published a report about the 'collective impact of the Dutch MDG3 Fund' (Batliwala (2013)): Women moving mountains. It was based on interviews with staff of MDG3 grantees, project reports and evaluations plus a questionnaire, (partially) completed by 35 of the 45 grantees, in which they were asked to describe positive effects of the grant only, in order to assess how the Fund 'helped advance women's rights/gender equality overall, across the various organizations and regions'.
The report, while describing the success story of the MDG3 Fund, faces however several methodological issues:

- While the report fits well within AWID's international quest for funding of women's organisations, it cannot be seen as an independent assessment, as AWID was actually among the 45 grantees of the very same fund.
- Moreover, although it uses the word 'impact' a lot, it is by no means an impact evaluation. Rather, it is a description of the MDG3 Fund, and its main achievements based on a collection of self-assessments by the grantees, enriched with best practices.
- Some of the questions in the questionnaire were guiding towards certain answers, as respondents have simply copied the examples given by AWID. In other cases, questions included substantially different options to which the respondents only had to answer 'yes' or 'no' if considered relevant.[15]

The so-called 'aggregate impact' that the report refers to, was calculated by adding up the difference in the (estimated) number of people 'reached' after and before the MDG3 Fund without specifying what the term 'reached' entailed. As a result, numbers of e-newsletter subscribers, people that were exposed to radio and television campaigns, website visitors or attended community dialogues, health workers trained, trained individuals, members of women's organisations who were interviewed, women who received legal advice, participants to conferences, rights advocates trained, etc. were simply added up and translated into '224 million people gained a new awareness of women's rights'.

Finally, quite a few organisations were unable to provide numbers or simply gave rough estimates. The experience of the evaluation of the MDG3 Fund makes clear that these figures are prone to substantial calculation errors.



15 An example is question 3a: 'We were able to reach/serve/support/empower a larger number of women/ women's organizations'. There is, however, a large difference between reaching a number of women, and empowering a women's organisation, but the questionnaire does not distinguish between these options.

## 1.4 Outline of the report

Chapter 2 starts with a description of the main features of the MDG3 Fund. The origin, purpose and set-up of the MDG3 Fund are described together with the main characteristics of its project portfolio. The chapters 3 to 6 cover the Fund's four thematic priority areas. Each thematic chapter starts with a description of the priority area, problems addressed and strategies implemented by the MDG3 Fund grantees. This is followed by the analysis of effectiveness at output and outcome level, based on the reconstructed generic result chain referred to above. Chapter 7 presents the findings of the analysis of sustainability and chapter 8 the analysis of efficiency. Chapter 9 provides the answers to the evaluation questions. The report concludes with a chapter 10 which provides a reflection on the ambition, purpose and assumptions of the MDG3 Fund together with elements for future policy development.

# 2

# Main features of the MDG3 Fund

## 2.1 Origin, purpose and priorities of the MDG3 Fund

For many years, the budget of the ministry of Foreign Affairs included a special 'Vrouwenfonds' (Women Fund) to finance activities in the field of Women in Development. It served to finance projects in Dutch aid partner countries and supported programmes of organisations such as Women's World Banking, the foundation Mama Cash and other Dutch organisations dealing with gender and development cooperation. However, this fund was abolished following the policy note 'Mutual interests, mutual responsibilities' of 2003 which came with a shift to programme-based approaches for aid implementation and an increased reliance on gender mainstreaming. The Netherlands' Government position at the time was that such gender mainstreaming did not go hand-in-hand with having a separate women fund (OECD (2006): 40).

With the appointment of a new minister for Development Cooperation in February 2007, the policy for having a stand-alone budget to support women's organisations changed. Late 2007, the establishment of a MDG3 Fund was announced. This decision was motivated as follows: realisation of MDG3 was lagging behind, but (women's) organisations had less and less money to improve the position of women while such improvement would not only serve MDG-3 but also contribute to sustainable development and realisation of the other MDGs (KST 108425 B (2007): 90).[16]



Establishment of the Fund followed a country-wide consultative process, culminating in the so-called *Schokland akkoord 'MDG3 Fund: Investing in equality'*, which was signed by the minister for Development Cooperation and a series of NGOs.[17] These signatories to the *Schokland akkoord* contributed to the design of the Fund's focus and its ensuing evaluation criteria.[18] The MDG3 Fund was effectively established by the Order no. DJZ/BR-0164/08 of the minister for Development Cooperation of 28 February 2008, published in the Government Gazette (*Staatscourant*). It was not seen as a new grant scheme, but rather as a temporary incentive facility (ending 30 June 2011) to boost the level of MDG3-related activities.
According to the above Order, the main objective of the MDG3 Fund was to support activities that would result in concrete improvements in rights and opportunities for women and girls in developing countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

16 See also KST 108425 B (2007): 96.

17 The organisations involved were Cordaid, Hivos, ICCO & Kerk in Actie, Mama Cash, Oxfam Novib, Women in Leadership, WO=MEN, the Dutch Gender Platform, Women on Top and the World Population Foundation.

18 The idea was also that the signatories would also monitor the progress of the MDG3 Fund project during their country visits, depending on the opportunity and the organisation concerned (Minutes of the meeting of signatories to the MDG3 Fund of 20 March 2008).

Priority themes for interventions[19] were in line with what was recommended by the UN Task Force on Education and Gender Equality in 2005[20]:

- Property and inheritance rights for women;
- Gender equality in employment and equal opportunities on the labour market;
- Participation and representation of women in national parliaments and political bodies;
- Combating violence against women.

The Fund's priority target groups were women and girls in situations of conflict, and marginalised women and adolescents, especially girls. The term 'marginalised women' was not further operationalised. In terms of geographical scope, though no country was excluded, projects in one or more of the countries from the OECD/DAC list of 2006 of ODA recipients would have priority.[21] There was to be no hierarchy in this list, although a balanced geographical distribution was aspired for.

By launching an international call for proposals, the aim was to support bigger, more established and experienced women's organisations that required less guidance and support – with smaller initiatives and organisations remaining the priority for the Dutch NGOs.[22] This would also give more visibility. To make sure that smaller women's organisations could access resources, the MDG3 Fund was open for women funds that had a tradition in re-granting. The idea was that this would contribute to the development of a 'women's movement' and would allow investing in capacity development of women's organisations.



Interviews held indicate furthermore that when introducing the MDG3 Fund, the idea was that it would:

- Allow for increased cooperation between women's organisations and thus realise a bigger reach and bigger impact by linking the different priority areas.
- Inspire other donors, including those within the private sector, to offset a decline in funding for gender equality and women's organisations.[23]

19 According to the minutes of the meetings of the signatories to the Schokland akkoord of 20 December 2007 and 31 January 2008, the Ministry agreed that a narrow interpretation of these priorities was not called for.

20 Other priorities identified by this Task Force were SRHR, infrastructure to reduce women's and girls' time burden and post-primary education (see UN Millennium Project (2005)). For SRHR and education, the ministry argued that other resources were already available within the Dutch aid budget.

21 Earlier thinking was to have the Fund cover a limited number of countries; this idea was later abandoned.

22 This was also evident from restrictions set on project size: grants for the 2008-2011 period were subject to a minimum of EUR 900,000 and a maximum of EUR 6 million and a minimum of EUR 750,000 and a maximum of EUR 5.15 million for the years 2009-2011. In terms of financing, MDG3 Fund rules also determined that the grant percentage could be 100%, that all project costs could be funded but that project preparation costs were not reimbursed. The Fund was also open for international organisations.

23 Early 2008, a side event was organised during the meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women to stimulate that other countries establish a similar fund.

- Contribute to the international discourse on the importance of gender equality and women's rights as a necessary condition for development of stable and balanced societies.[24]

## 2.2 Putting the MDG3 Fund into practice

While overall political responsibility remained with the ministry, represented by the Gender Unit, it was decided to contract an external party to manage the MDG3 Fund, including the assessment of proposals, financial management and monitoring and reporting. This decision was fuelled by the following considerations:

- Management tasks would be substantial, despite an advocacy for 'monitoring light', and the ministry was facing a reduction in staffing.
- A preference for separating policymaking and policy implementation.
- Management should be independent, thus avoiding potential conflict of interest.
- Earlier positive experiences with a similar management set-up in the area of private sector development.

In the end, PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC), an accountancy firm, and Femconsult, a Dutch consultancy firm providing technical advice on gender related issues, were contracted in 2008.[25]



The Fund was launched in March 2008 with an international call for proposals. An application form was made available over the Internet. The ministry and Dutch development NGOs like Oxfam Novib and Hivos brought the Fund to public attention. The expectation was that some 80 organisations would submit a proposal. Ultimately, 454 applications were received between 15 March and 14 May 2008, which included 300 applications from developing countries (KST 119600B (2008): 96). Since the ministry felt that there were many applications of good quality, it decided to (a) extend the decision-making period for awarding grants from 15 July to 13 October 2008 and (b) to increase the initial budget of EUR 50 million to EUR 70 million.

An appraisal committee was installed to assess the applications and to guide the minister for Development Cooperation in deciding which applicants should be awarded a grant. This committee consisted of five gender experts: three representatives of the ministry of Foreign Affairs and two independent members recommended by the *Schokland akkoord* partners. The committee and the minister were assisted in the appraisal process by PwC and Femconsult. Eligibility criteria were set for both the applying organisations and the projects submitted for funding. Proposals from organisations that met these eligibility criteria went through a staged selection process.

24 In particular the above mentioned AWID report 'Women moving mountains' has been circulated and used widely to show the importance of the MDG3 Fund and what it has meant for women's organisations in developing countries. While its methodological foundations are found debatable, it did contribute to the international discourse on gender equality and women's rights.

25 The option to sub-contract management to one of the signatories of the Schokland akkoord was rejected (Minutes meeting signatories of 20 December 2007).

The first assessment phase looked at the completeness of the application as well as its compliance with a number of threshold criteria (like meeting the application deadline, the provision of obligatory documents (annual reports, etc.), and compliance with the timeline defined by the Ministry). Out of the 454 applications, 203 proposals did not pass this first test. Out of the remaining 251 applications, 35 did not pass the second stage of the assessment that dealt with the applicant's organisational capacity. This second stage [26] aimed to determine whether: (i) the applicant's aims were aligned with the objective of the grant award; (ii) the applicant could ensure adequate financial management; and (iii) the applicant could guarantee effective and efficient implementation of the activities as a result of previous experience and expertise in relation to the activities for which a grant was sought. The strategy for re-granting, when proposed, was assessed as well at this stage. Organisations that did not pass this appraisal were often small organisations with a limited track record that requested a subsidy that exceeded their annual turnover by far.[27]

This left 216 applications for the final stage of the assessment, during which the applications were assessed and scored on the following criteria: (i) relevance, (ii) preference for Southern applicants, (iii) quality of the intervention strategy, (iv) detailed description of the intended results that were to be specific, measurable, acceptable to relevant stakeholders, realistic and achievable within some timeframe, (v) quality of financial and administrative management of the applicant, (vi) support base of the applicants in the countries were the activities were to be carried out, (vii) envisaged sustainability of the proposed interventions.



Interviews undertaken for this evaluation confirm that there were no guidelines as to *what* could be financed – neither in terms of project content, nor in terms of budget categories (an exception being infrastructure, which was excluded). The idea was to avoid too strict criteria in order to stimulate innovation and creativity. All types of expenditure were in principle eligible, provided that there was a clear explanation of why they were foreseen.
The interviews also corroborated that complementarity – e.g. with bilateral initiatives – was not a selection criterion as this was not aspired. Still, information on proposals that made it to final round of the selection process was shared with the Dutch embassies.[28]

While the quality of the proposed M&E system was part of the appraisal, interviews indicate that it was not the intention to impose a strict M&E framework. Nevertheless, applications were granted additional points when a budget line for evaluation – which was not obligatory – was included.

For the 216 applications that made it to the last round, assessment memorandums were drafted and made available to the appraisal committee, which then compared the applications and

26 The assessment was based on: the ministry's Checklist for Organisational Capacity Assessment (COCA), the organisation's own articles of association/constitution, annual reports and financial statements for the last two years, organogram and overall distribution of staff, number of staff and division of tasks, the organisation's administrative organisation / internal control system and (optional) a recent external evaluation report.

27 Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (2008).

28 The few reactions that were received were discussed at the level of the appraisal committee. In addition, the list of approved projects was shared with Dutch civil society as several applicants also received funding from this side. Proposals were also checked to avoid double funding.

ranked them in order of their compliance with the criteria mentioned above. Those that complied best with the criteria were placed at the top and seen as mostly like to contribute to realising MDG3 by 2015 in their respective contexts. Consensus was reached on this ranking and the scores given. Big discrepancies in the scoring were discussed within the committee.

After this ranking, the committee assessed whether the budgets requested were appropriate. In some cases the committee advised not to grant the entire budget requested. The Minister acted accordingly. In the end 45 projects were selected for funding of which about 1/3rd (14) were funded in full and in line with budget asked for, while for the remainder only part of the budget was granted[29] and applicants were asked to submit an adjusted activity plan and budget.[30] Overall, the organisations received 74% of what they had originally requested from the MDG3 Fund. Applicants were informed about the scoring of their proposals and their position in the ranking. In 21 cases, they appealed their inability to receive funds, but in the end no appeals were honoured.

Although stakeholders interviewed judged the appraisal process as fair and transparent, issues identified are the following:

- Since the appraisal criteria were not shared with the applicants in advance, they could not take them into account when preparing their proposals.
- The appraisal form was judged to be difficult and fragmented.
- An important number of the initial appraisals that were drafted by freelance consultants of PwC and Femconsult were judged to be of insufficient quality, requiring that they be reformulated.



The 45 projects that were selected were awarded a contract in October 2008 and project implementation started that same year.

In October 2010, a short review of the MDG3 Fund was undertaken (SPAN Consultants (2010)). One of the reasons for doing so was to see whether there was sufficient justification to continue the Fund. The ministry moreover expected to be able to use the review to ‘advertise' the Fund among other donors, the private sector and civil society organisations, with three new partners expected to join the *Schokland akkoord* on the MDG3 Fund (KST 132821B (2009): 114).[31] The review, which had to be conducted in as little as ten days, indicated that the Fund was a success and that the projects were showing promising results.[32]

29 Reasons for partial awards were: (a) the need for an optimal geographical spread and distribution of themes, taking into account the Fund's limited budget; (b) if an applicant's current annual income was limited in relation to the annual amount requested from the MDG3 Fund; (c) when applicants were reasonably expected to be able to fund the remaining costs from their own resources or through other sources.

30 The signatories of the Schokland *akkoord* were informed on the projects that had scored high but had not made it to this list of 45. Idea was that they could possibly be interested in funding them from their own resources (Minutes of the meeting of 3 September 2009).

31 In May 2011, Parliament was informed that the UK had made a financial contribution while negotiations within another donor on a possible partnership were ongoing (KST 32710-V-1 (2011): 45). Talks also took place with companies on possible public-private partnerships; however, without concrete results.

32 Similar positive observations were made in KST 31703-5 (2010): 12 and KST 32710-V-1 (2011): 19-20; 45.

Given these findings, and taking into account a motion in Parliament to increase the operational budget for gender equality, a decision was made in 2011 to top up the Fund with EUR 7 million. It was also decided to extend the Fund's lifetime from 1 July to 31 December 2011.[33] The increase in funds was higher than originally requested by Parliament and was made possible thanks to lower than expected expenditures in the area of gender equality programming by the embassies (KST 32605-21 (2011): 1). With this topping up and extension in time, it was perceived that projects would be able to continue to operate and that a natural transition would be created for the new programme Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women (FLOW) that was to start from 1 January 2012 onwards (on FLOW see text box 2) (KST 32605-21 (2011): 2).

**Text box 2** *FLOW – Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women programme*

Like the MDG3 Fund, FLOW programme (2012-2015) provides grants for civil initiatives of NGOs and other women's organisations in the areas of security (including violence against women), economic empowerment (with an emphasis on food security, land, water and economic rights) and political participation. The aim of these grants is to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as a building block for structural poverty reduction. The Fund is also linked to efforts that follow-up on the aims of UN Resolution 1325 with regards to women and violence and women and politics.[34] The initial budget of EUR 70 million was increased to EUR 80 million which currently funds 35 projects.[35] Selection process and management set-up are basically similar as for the MDG3 Fund.



There were specific criteria for organisations that wanted additional funding. A top up had to be in line with the original proposals and requests for additional funds were assessed according to a range of threshold and appraisal criteria. The first set of criteria related to maximum size of the top-up (no more than 15% of the original project budget), income generated by the applicant from other sources than the Netherlands ministry of Foreign Affairs (25% minimum), activities were to last a maximum of six months and were to end by 31 December 2012 and were to be related to those originally financed and in line with the aims of the MDG3 Fund. The second set of criteria mirrored those used during the original assessment. In addition, progress of the original project was to be assessed, plus the extent to which the impact of this project would be enhanced by providing additional resources. All 45 organisations under the MDG3 Fund reacted: 6 requested only a budget neutral extension in time, 39 requested for additional funding plus an extension in time, resulting in an additional request for 9 million EUR which could not be fully honoured. In the end, 31 organisations received additional funding for a total of EUR 6.9 million.

[33] Staatscourant (2011).
[34] Brief van de Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken aan de Voorzitter van de Tweede Kamer, 7 November 2011, ref. BSG-239/2011.
[35] The increase in budget is partly related to a series of complaints to decisions not to finance certain projects that were considered justified, partly to Parliament requesting that additional funding be made available.

## 2.3 Description of the MDG3 Fund portfolio

The following paragraphs provide some of the main characteristics of the 45 MDG3 Fund projects. Focus is on the following aspects: geographical distribution, organisational characteristics of the grantees, thematic coverage, beneficiary organisations reached and the amount of grants requested and spent.

### Geographical distribution

The MDG3 Fund projects were implemented in 103 countries in four continents (see table 4), with 58% of the 45 projects implemented in Sub-Sahara Africa. This is in line with the balanced geographical spread that was aspired for.

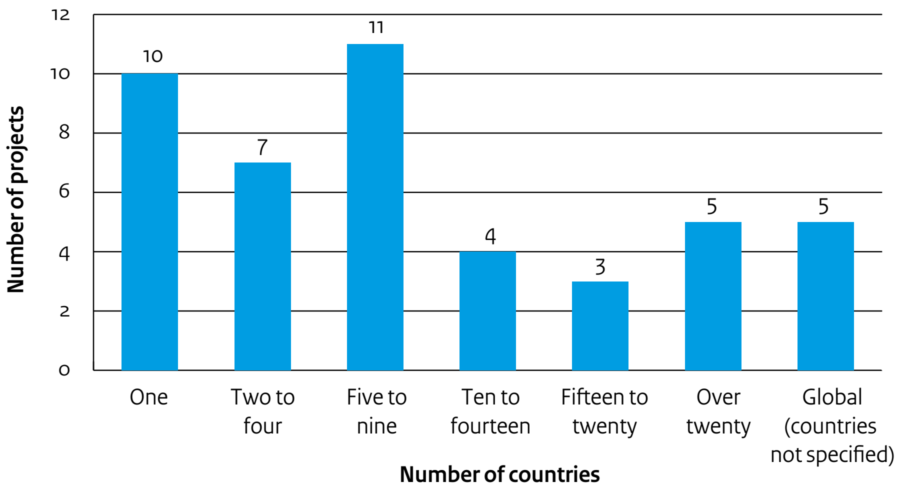
**Table 4** Number of projects and countries covered per region

| Region | # projects (n = 40)[36] | # countries |
|---|---|---|
| Sub-Sahara Africa | 26 | 43 |
| Asia | 15 | 21 |
| Latin America | 13 | 20 |
| Middle East | 6 | 7 |
| North Africa | 5 | 4 |
| Eastern Europe | 3 | 8 |



In terms of numbers of countries covered per project, figure 2 makes clear that ten projects were implemented in one country and ten projects in more than twenty countries or globally. All other projects covered at least two different countries. This was in line with a preference for multi-country projects.

**Figure 2** *Number of countries per project (N = 45)*




[36] Five projects were marked as 'global' without mentioning specific countries of intervention.

The available data shows that the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Sudan and India are the countries where the largest number of MDG3 Fund grantees (eight) was active. In 75 countries 2 to 7 grantees have implemented interventions and in another 25 there was only one. Though the idea was that there would be collaboration between individual projects at country level, the field visits made clear that in practice such collaboration was limited or non-existent.

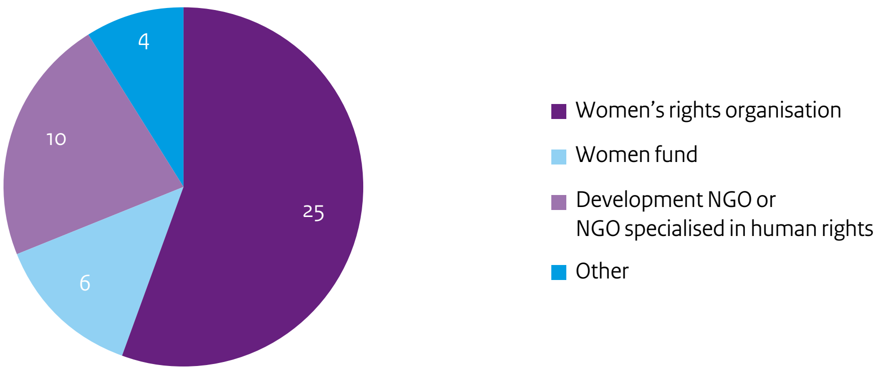
In total 22 grantees (49%) were active in all 11 fragile states. The fragile states with the highest number of MDG3 Fund interventions are the DRC, Sudan and Pakistan. 28 grantees (62%) were active in the Dutch aid 'partner countries' (period 2009-2011): Bolivia, Burkina Faso, DRC, Egypt, Guatemala, Kosovo, Moldova, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Senegal, Tanzania, and Zambia.

### Characteristics of the MDG3 grantees

As is evident from section 2.2, there were not too many restrictions on the organisations that could apply for the MDG3 Fund. At the same time, preference was given to well established organisations, preferably international organisations and networks intervening in more than one country and having a support base in developing countries. According to interviews held, women funds were selected because of their tradition in channeling small funds to civil society organisations that had difficulties in getting access to money. Figure 3 provides information on the different types of organisations that have received a grant.



**Figure 3** *MDG3 Fund portfolio by type of organisation*




*Note: 'Other' includes two press and communication organisations, one confederation of trade unions and one research institute.*

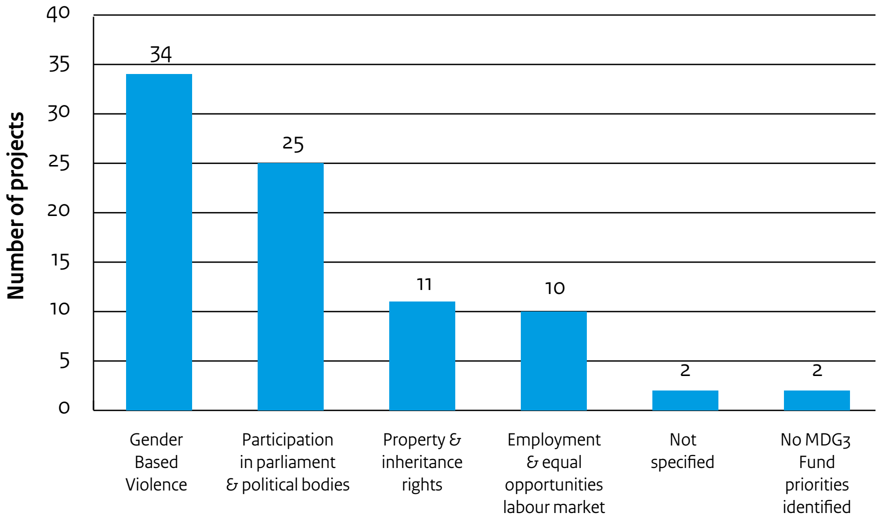
Grantees were based in 24 different countries, with the United States being home to the largest number of them (7). Of the 45 grantees, 7 (16 %) were based in Europe, 9 (20%) came from the United States and Canada (see table 5). In line with the Fund's preference for organisations from the South, 29 (or 64%) grantees were based in Africa (16), Asia ( 5) and Latin America (8). Only two grantees were from the Netherlands.

| Table 5 | Number of grantees per country of origin | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1 grantee** | **2 grantees** | **3 grantees** | **7 grantees** |
| Argentina; Belgium; Bolivia; Brazil; China; Colombia; Egypt; Iraq; Italy; Mexico; Namibia; Nicaragua; Togo | Canada; Ghana; Netherlands; Peru; Senegal | India; Kenya; Uganda; United Kingdom; South Africa | United States |

## Thematic coverage

Figure 4 presents the distribution of the 45 projects across the four priority themes of the MDG3 Fund.[37] For two projects it was found that, although they clearly focus on gender equality issues, there is no direct link with the Fund's four priorities.

**Figure 4** *Thematic coverage of the MDG3 Fund priorities (N = 45)*






[37] The data in this figure can differ from effective implementation. In the analysis of the sample of 17 projects it appeared that several grantees had mentioned interventions for more priority areas than what occurred in reality or vice versa. As this could not be verified for all 45 projects, the figure is based upon self-reported results (final reports). Numbers mentioned in the thematic chapters may be different as they are based on in-depth analysis.

The majority of projects focused on two or more of the Fund's priority themes simultaneously as is shown in table 6.[38] Most often fighting violence against women was combined with enhancing political participation of women.

**Table 6 Number of projects addressing one or more priority areas (N = 45)**

| # of MDG3 Fund priorities | # projects | % |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 16 | 36 |
| 2 | 18 | 40 |
| 3 | 6 | 13 |
| 4 | 1 | 2 |
| Not specified | 2 | 4 |
| No priorities identified | 2 | 4 |
| **Total** | **45** | **100** |

## Type of activities



Figure 5 shows that there has been considerable similarity in the types of activities that were undertaken. Lobby and advocacy stand out in this respect and were undertaken by 80% of the projects, followed by research and research dissemination (75%) and capacity building of civil society organisations (70%).[39] Building up alliances and networking, mainly by organising national and/or international meetings and capacity building of grassroots groups, was done by close to 70% of the projects. Over 60% was involved in awareness raising, targeting either the general public (public awareness raising) and/or government institutions (institutional awareness raising).[40]

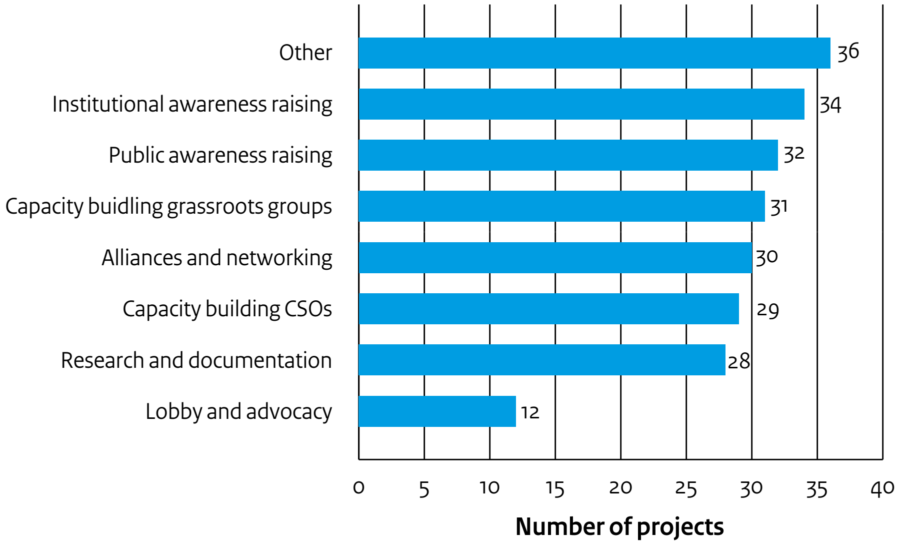
The category 'other' (27%) includes activities such as direct support to specific cases of human rights violations and support for women participating in political campaigns.

[38] This finding is based on the assessment memorandums (BEMO's) and final assessments of all 45 projects. When further analysing the sample of projects it appeared that the number of priority themes as indicated in these documents was not always in line with the activities implemented.

[39] Capacity building was done through the training of trainers, linking organisations to networks, information dissemination and facilitating access to money. Thirteen MDG3 grantees, including the six women funds mentioned earlier, provided small grants to women and human rights organisations.

[40] This included raising awareness on women's rights in relation to the priority areas, awareness raising among policy makers on the need for policy changes, monitoring of policy implementation and assisting women and women's organisations to document violations of their rights.

**Figure 5** *Typology of activities undertaken by MDG3 Fund projects*





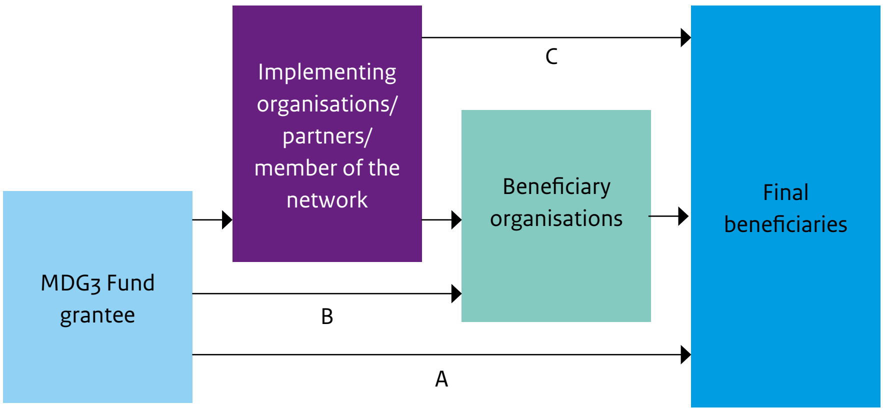

## Beneficiaries

When referring to beneficiaries of the MDG3 Fund, the evaluations distinguishes two broad categories of beneficiaries as is shown in figure 6 which visualises the MDG3 Fund's intervention chain: (i) *immediate beneficiaries*: implementing organisations, partners, members of the network and beneficiary organisations and (ii) *final beneficiaries*: those who ultimately benefited from the interventions of the MDG3 Fund.

Depending on the project, final beneficiaries were reached:

- either directly through activities implemented by the MDG3 Fund grantee (A),
- through an organisation that was supported/strengthened by the MDG3 Fund grantee (so-called beneficiary organisation - B), or
- through a partner of the grantee (implementing partners) which in turn supported beneficiary organisations or the final beneficiaries directly (C).

**Figure 6** *MDG3 Fund intervention chain*




**Immediate beneficiaries**
Immediate beneficiaries were the civil society organisations that were supported to implement parts of the MDG3 Fund projects (the 'Beneficiary organisations' in figure 6). These organisations often served to capacitate other NGOs or grassroots organisations to implement lobby and advocacy campaigns, to strengthen female leadership and claim-making power of women or (to a limited extent) to improve service delivery to the final beneficiaries.



The type of organisations supported varied; NGOs/CSOs, but also government institutions, academic institutions, judiciary and/or law enforcement agencies, trade unions, media organisations, parliament and political parties have been supported with the MDG3 Fund.

Besides these 'official' organisations, various projects have also targeted more informal immediate beneficiaries including religious leaders, youth, victims of violence, activists, local (women) leaders, teachers and students, etc. Given the observations on M&E above, an exact number of organisations that have benefitted cannot be given. Also grantees met during the country visits could not provide reliable numbers of outreach.

More than half of the grantees have transferred resources to implementing partners or members of their networks. They have used several systems to do so, with more details provided in chapter 8:

- Six grantees were (women) funds that operate through their respective tender procedures (also see table 7). Granting is their core business, combined with capacity development, networking, linking and learning of grantees
- Thirteen grantees were international organisations that implemented projects in several countries together with implementing partners. These partners, either existing or newly identified, received money to execute parts of the projects. They also benefitted from

capacity development support from the MDG3 Fund grantee (organisational development focusing on the capability to deliver and networking).[41]
- Four grantees (international networks) have used the MDG3 Fund to strengthen their network and to enable network members to execute projects within the scope of the MDG3 Fund. In some cases a call for proposals was launched within these networks.

**Table 7 Overview of the number of sub grantees of the women funds and corresponding MDG3 Fund grant (n = 6)**

| Grantee - Women fund | # of sub grantees | Final grant (EUR million) |
|---|---|---|
| AWDF | 232 | 5.75 |
| UAF (rapid response grants) | 157 | 1.15 |
| Semillas | 14 | 1.60 |
| Fundación Puntos de Encuentro / Central American Women Fund | 244 | 2.00 |
| Global Fund for Women | 125 | 2.16 |
| Fund for Global Human Rights | 200 | 1.73 |



**Final beneficiaries**

As mentioned above, three loosely defined groups of '*final beneficiaries*' were prioritised by the MDG3 Fund: (1) marginalised women, (2) women and girls in conflict situations and (3) adolescents. The evaluation shows that 35 projects targeted marginalised women, 25 projects focused on marginalised women and girls in conflict situations,[42] 20 projects on adolescents and that 21 projects reached out to two or all three target groups. Given the limitations mentioned above, the exact number of final beneficiaries reached cannot be given.

Looking at the category of '*marginalised women*' in more detail shows that this category is very diverse. It includes women belonging to typically marginalised groups (sex workers, women with HIV/aids, disabled women, lesbian and transgender women, girl child soldiers, trafficked young women, adolescent mothers, single mothers, victims of sexual violence, domestic workers, …), and women belonging to marginalised populations (religious or ethnic minorities, refugees, indigenous women, …). Final beneficiaries are in project documents also described as marginalised because they are poor or their rights are not equal and not adequately documented in the law, because they are not adequately included in the policy-making or because they suffer from intolerant political and/or religious agendas.

[41] Organisational development focuses on capacity development of the organisation (internal procedures, systems, technical capacities and know-how); institutional strengthening focuses on strengthening of networking, lobby and advocacy capacities. The capability to deliver refers to technical, financial and logistical skills and competences to carry out activities.

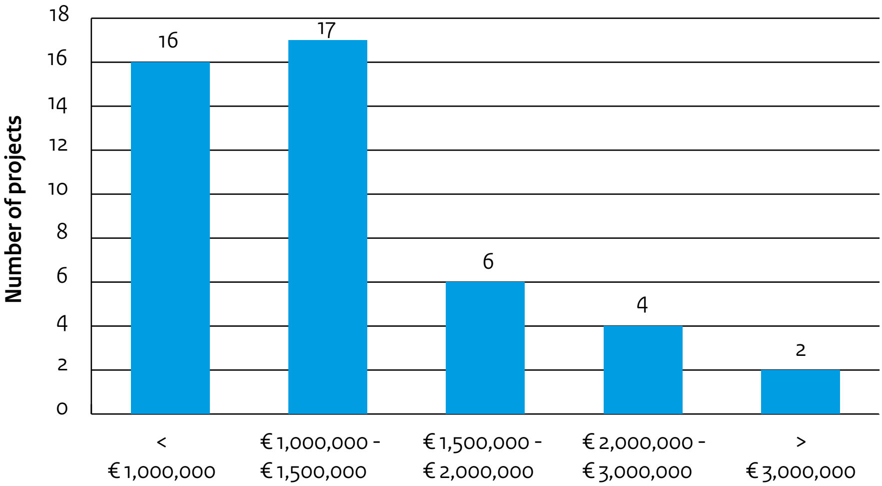
[42] Four of these 25 projects exclusively dealt with women and girls in conflict situations in the following countries: Colombia, Uganda, DRC, Sudan, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenia, Central African Republic, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, Niger and Senegal. The other projects also reached out to other target groups.

## Financial data

### Grants requested and approved

The total value of grants awarded amounts to EUR 76.8 million. This includes the grants initially awarded in 2008 (EUR 69.9 million) and the additional grants that were approved for the extension period 2011-2012 (EUR 6.9 million). Figure 7 shows that over a third of the project portfolio (sixteen projects) received up till EUR 1 million (with five of them receiving the minimum grant of EUR 750,000). Two projects were granted over EUR 3 million (i.e. EUR 4.38 million and EUR 5 million respectively). The average size of the initial grants was EUR 1.55 million.

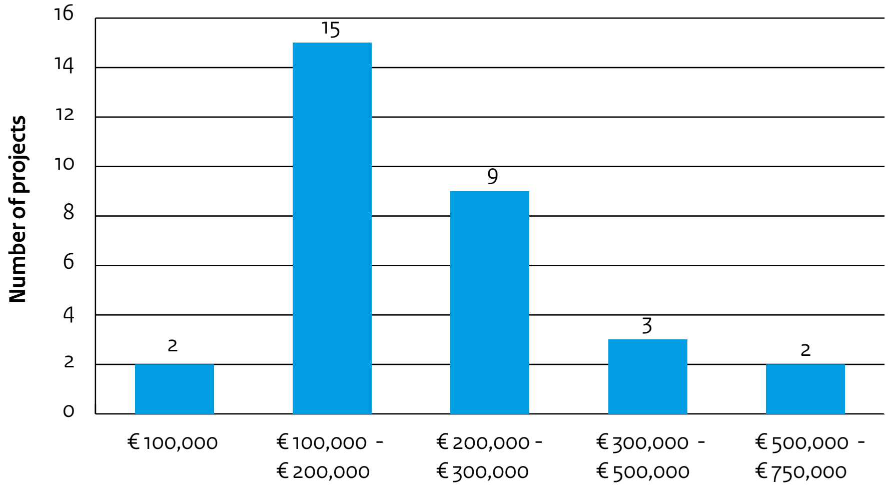
**Figure 7** *Overview of the amount of the grant approved in 2008 (N = 45)*






Fourteen organisations received a budget-neutral extension in time to allow them to finalise the original project plan. The other thirty-one (69%) received an additional grant in 2011 which averaged EUR 225,000 with a minimum of EUR 100,000 and a maximum of EUR 750,000 (see figure 8).

**Figure 8** *Overview of the amount of the additional grant approved in 2011 (N = 31)*






**Grants effectively spent**

The total amount finally paid by the MDG3 Fund is EUR 75.8 million (i.e. 98.5% of the total budget approved). In some cases, project expenditures exceeded the approved grant, in others they remained below it. Overspending or under-spending was however rarely higher than 2% of the grant approved. The actual amount paid by the ministry never exceeded the sum that was originally granted.[43] Four projects left more than 5% of the budget unused.

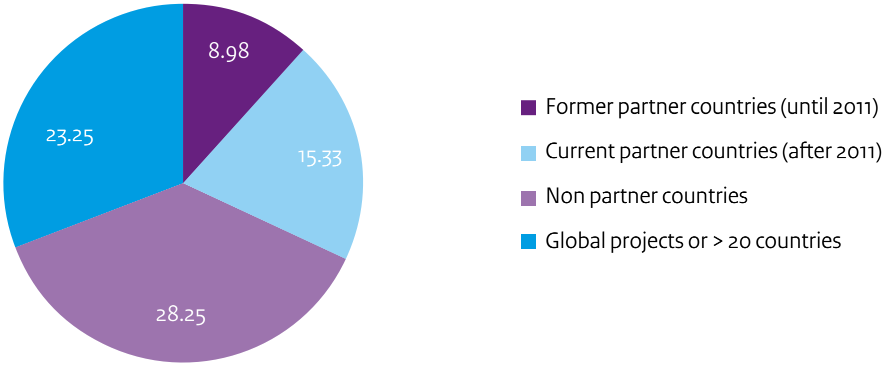
**Geographical distribution of the grants**

Of the total amount of EUR 75.8 million spent, EUR 27.9 million (37%) went to projects in Africa, EUR 5.2 million (7%) to projects in Asia and EUR 10 million (13%) to projects in Latin America. The remaining EUR 32.6 million (43%) went to global projects or projects implemented in at least 2 different continents. Figure 9 gives an estimate of the budget spent in the (former) partner countries of Dutch development cooperation and shows that close to one third of the budget (EUR 24.3 million) went to these partners.[44]

[43] This implied that if the calculation resulted in an amount exceeding the amount of approved grant, the final grant was limited to the approved grant. As interest yields were generally sufficient to cover any 'budget overspending', the final grants usually covered total project cost.

[44] The grant of projects intervening in several countries has been distributed equally among these countries for purpose of this analysis, what is most probably not correct (budgets per country are not available). The figure is as such an estimation of the budget spent in the Dutch aid countries.

**Figure 9** *Estimated share of budget spent in (former) Dutch partner countries and elsewhere (in EUR million)*




**Share of own contribution by the grantee**

Eleven grantees provided information on how much they contributed from their own resources to the MDFG3 Fund projects, seventeen reported contributions from other donors.[45] When combining these two types of contributions, it is found that for 33 projects the MDG3 grant covered more than 75% of the project budget. For 21 projects it was the sole source of funding. For only 6 projects, the contribution from the MDG3 Fund represented less than 50%.



The analysis furthermore shows that all MDG3 Fund grantees had access to a variety of donors. One of the policy choices was to support bigger, more established and experienced women's organisations that required less guidance and support, with smaller initiatives and organisations remaining the domain for the Dutch NGOs. Data on the sample of seventeen MDG3 Fund projects shows however that fourteen grantees also had access to funds from Dutch NGOs in the period 2009-2011 (see table 8) (but usually for other projects). In addition, eight grantees received funding from important donors like the UN Trust Fund on Violence Against Women and the Global Fund for Women.

[45] Information on other contributions was not systematically given and only the data available were used. It is possible that these contributions are higher than would appear from these figures.

| Table 8 | Overview of Dutch NGOs and other donors supporting MDG3 Fund grantees (n = 17) | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Dutch donors | | | | | International donors | |
| MDG 3 Fund Grantee | Hivos | Oxfam Novib | Cordaid | Mama Cash | Others[46] | Global Fund for Women | UN Trust Fund VAW |
| ACM | ■ | | | | | | |
| ASMA | | | | | | ■ | |
| AWDF | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | ■ | |
| Breakthrough | | ■ | | | | | ■ |
| CREA | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | |
| Gender Links | ■ | | | | ■ | | ■ |
| Huairou Commission | | | ■ | | | | |
| Isis-WICCE | ■ | | | | ■ | | |
| ITUC* | | | | | | | |
| NIZA* | | | | | | | |
| Oxfam GB | | ■ | | | | | |
| SafAIDS | ■ | | | | | | ■ |
| UAF | ■ | | ■ | ■ | | ■ | |
| V-Day Karama | ■ | | | ■ | | ■ | |
| WANEP | | | ■ | | | | |
| WIEGO | | ■ | | | | | |
| WLP | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ | | | |

** Grantee without financial support of the donors mentioned.*



46 ICCO, KIT and NIZA.

## 2.4 Conclusions

The MDG3 Fund was established at a time when separate funding for gender equality was limited. The launch of the Fund was met with great interest, as proven by the 450+ applications submitted. Consequently, the ministry decided to increase the Fund's budget from an initial EUR 50 million to EUR 70 million, which was in 2011 topped up with an additional EUR 7 million to reach a total of EUR 77 million. In the end, 45 projects were financed from the Fund. These were selected following a staged and intensive selection process that, despite some reservations, is judged to have been fair and transparent and which has not given cause to complaints that had to be honoured.

In line with the Fund's preferences, 35 out of the 45 projects were multi-country projects, with 10 of them implemented in more than 20 countries or at a global level. This corresponds also with the fact that regional and international organisations or networks form the majority of the grantees. About one third covered also covering (former) Dutch aid partner countries while 11 were (also) active in fragile states. Also in line with the Fund's intentions, over two-thirds of the grantees were from Southern countries such as Colombia, Senegal and India, though the United States was home to the largest number (7). Other characteristics of these grantees, of which almost 70% were women's organisations or women funds, are moreover in line with the preference for well-established organisations. The choice for women funds furthermore allowed reaching smaller women's and civil society organisations through different types of re-granting; however, details of these beneficiaries down the chain are hard to come by.



With few exceptions, the projects operated within the Fund's four priority themes, with 75% of them focusing on combating gender-based violence, often in combination with the second priority of women's political participation. More than 55% of the projects covered more than one theme. The more 'economic' priority themes of employment and property rights were less frequently covered. Projects have operated with a broad range of civil society organisations as well the media, universities and research institutions. Collaboration with parliament and political parties was limited.

Looking at the types of activities financed by the Fund, it appears that 80% of the grantees have implemented lobby and advocacy interventions, including research, strengthening networking and investing in awareness raising on equal rights and opportunities of women.

The final beneficiaries include many different types of marginalised women and girls that are usually reached through a long intervention chain with several organisations intervening in project implementation. The number of beneficiaries reached in the end is, however, unknown.

3

# Combating Gender Based Violence

## 3.1 Setting the scene

Gender based violence (GBV) is physical, psychological or sexual violence against an individual or a group on the basis of gender or gender norms.[47] Although men can also be victims, the majority of victims of GBV are women. GBV can be understood as the outcome of interplay between a combination of social and situational factors (such as gender norms, economic factors and legal frameworks) and individual causes (decision making power, attitudes, economic resources, etc.). Its occurrence is influenced by power inequality that exists in the economic, socio-cultural or political sphere. In the context of (post) (armed) conflict, wartime factors such as greater polarization of gender roles may exacerbate GBV. GBV constrains women's choices and (potentially) excludes them from participation in society; it moreover has important economic costs. A reduction of this violence may thus increase women's choices and enhance their position in social, economic and political life.

A total of 36 MDG3 Fund projects (80%) addressed GBV, making it the most frequently addressed priority theme. Out of these 36, it was the sole priority theme for eleven projects, whereas thirteen dealt with GBV plus political participation and one (Gender Links) combined GBV with equal employment. Six projects have combined GBV with two other priority themes; an example is ACM, which worked on GBV, political participation and land rights.



Three main types of interventions to reduce GBV were undertaken within the framework of the MDG3 Fund rojects as is shown in table 9.

**Table 9 Types of interventions and activities combating GBV**

| Main types of interventions | Activities undertaken by MDG3 Fund projects |
|---|---|
| Providing timely and effective assistance when GBV occurs. | Service delivery to survivors of violence, including interventions such as conflict mediation, providing shelters and financial assistance for survivors, the training of public officers to improve their service delivery. One project (Isis-WICCE) provided medical treatment of survivors of GBV during armed conflicts. |
| Legal framework interventions on GBV that aim at advocating for laws to stop impunity and strengthen responsiveness of state infrastructure to solve cases of GBV. | Interventions included lobby and advocacy towards policy makers, monitoring and documenting the (non) application of laws and the training of lawyers and juridical staff to implement laws. |
| Focus on preventing GBV by shifting norms and behaviour not only in society at large or among men, but also among women themselves. | Social norm interventions ranged from educational programmes, awareness raising, and social dialogues to media campaigns. Measurement was done of (changes in) attitudes towards women in general and violence against women in particular and actual, often self-reported levels of violence against women. |

47 According to CEDAW general recommendation n° 19: Gender Based Violence refers to violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or to violence that affects women disproportionately.

Furthermore, women's economic independence may improve the authority over decisions allowing women to challenge gender norms and thereby reduce violence against them, although initially the opposite may also be true (Dekker (2012)). Though e.g. Dekker (2012) indicates that multi-dimensional programmes fighting GBV might be more effective than one dimensional ones, only two projects (Oxfam GB and AWDF) showed elements of a multi-dimensional approach, combining social norms interventions with economic empowerment, civic education and political empowerment. However, little is known of the nature and results of the interventions. Text box 3 provides some examples of the different types of interventions assessed for this particular thematic area.

**Text box 3** *Examples of different intervention types for combating GBV*

Social norms: The MDG3 project implemented by the Southern Africa HIV and AIDS Information Dissemination Service (SafAIDS) in five countries in Southern Africa focused on cultural practices, beliefs and customary laws that are harmful to women. By training local leaders and organising community dialogues the project addressed local social norms like widow cleansing and offered alternative, non-harmful practices instead.



Legal framework: The Egyptian organisation V-day Karama implemented a GBV project in 11 countries in the MENA region by addressing national discriminatory laws. It did so by submitting shadow reports which called for action and by raising awareness about the status of women in MENA countries to the UN Human Rights Council and the CEDAW committee.

Service delivery: The Uganda based organisation Isis – Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange (Isis-WICCE) aimed to improve the lives of women living in conflict situations and those of victims of sexual violence during and after armed conflict. It did so by training health workers in South Sudan and Liberia in recognizing and treating physical and mental health problems and by providing trauma healing and medical surgery for victims of sexual violence.

Economic empowerment: The African Women Development Fund (AWDF) used the MDG3 Fund grant to scale up the capacity of African women's organisations and movements to deal with, amongst others, violence against women. AWDF's implementing partner organisations provided trainings and workshops in entrepreneurial and business skills, combined with credit and asset delivery to start small businesses.

Combined data on the themes addressed and the types of interventions used for the sample of projects reviewed in depth is provided in table 10.

**Table 10 Intervention types of assessed projects addressing GBV (n = 13)**

| | Only GBV | GBV + 1 other theme | GBV + 2 other themes | Social norms | Legal framework | Service delivery | Economic empowerment |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ACM | | | ■ | | ■ | ■ | |
| ASMA | ■ | | | | ■ | | |
| AWDF | | ■ | | | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| Breakthrough | ■ | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | |
| CREA | ■ | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | |
| Gender Links | | ■ | | | ■ | | |
| ISIS | | ■ | | | ■ | ■ | |
| Oxfam GB | ■ | | | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| SafAIDS | ■ | | | ■ | ■ | | |
| UAF | | ■ | | | ■ | | |
| V-Day Karama | | ■ | | | ■ | | |
| WANEP | | ■ | | | ■ | | |
| WLP | | ■ | | | ■ | | |



## 3.2 Effectiveness

The following paragraphs present the main findings of the analysis of the effectiveness of the thirteen projects in the sample that focus on GBV, i.e. the extent to which they have realised their objectives. We start with what was realised in terms of outputs and then proceed with an assessment of the outcomes.

### Output realised

**Improved service delivery**

The MDG3 Fund projects focus on strengthening the organisations' capacity to improve the delivery of services. Table 11 gives an overview of the kind of services delivered and the number of people trained to deliver these services. No data is available on whether the projects have resulted in improved access and quality of these services, which makes it impossible to describe their outcomes.

**Table 11 Overview of services provided and number of people trained to provide these services for the projects of the sample (n = 6)**

| Grantee-project | Strategy | Output |
|---|---|---|
| ACM | Training of lawyers and juridical staff to improve their services | 25 lawyers and judicial officers trained (one country) |
| AWDF | Shelter and/or economic support for survivors of violence | No data available from the organisations that obtained a grant from AWDF for activities in this domain |
| Breakthrough | Training of volunteers and professionals to provide counselling, conflict mediation, and provision of psychological, financial or legal support for victims putting claims at local courts | 7,735 people and 25,000 staff members of 100 CBOs/NGOs trained in India. No data on trained lawyers and juridical staff |
| | Training of lawyers and juridical staff to improve their services | |
| CREA | Training of volunteers and professionals to provide counselling, conflict mediation, and provision of psychological, financial or legal support for victims putting claims at local courts | No complete data available.<br>300 students/year and 116 staff of 94 CBOs (Bangladesh); 31 staff of 28 CBOs (Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan);<br>28 staff of CBOs in online training course |
| Oxfam GB | Training of volunteers and professionals to provide counselling, conflict mediation, and provision of psychological, financial or legal support for victims putting claims at local courts | 10 million registered change makers[48] in Bangladesh. No data on trained lawyers and juridical staff |
| | Training of lawyers and juridical staff to improve their services | |
| Isis-WICCE | Trauma healing and medical surgery for victims of sexual violence | Medical surgery for 207 victims of armed conflict in Liberia and 23 girls with virginal fistula in South Sudan |
| | Training health workers in recognizing and treating physical and mental health problems related to armed conflict | 85 health workers trained in Liberia and South Sudan |



[48] The core strategy of Oxfam GB's 'WE CAN' – campaign is the training of individual people to recognise forms of GBV and to react when this occurs in the household or the community. In Bangladesh 10 million change makers were trained by 500 organisations and 700 public institutions that are involved in the campaign.

Addressing GBV, counselling and mediating by trained volunteers and professionals is not always easy as shown in the evaluation reports of the Breakthrough and Oxfam GB projects (Bhatla and Achyut (2011) and Oxfam GB (2012)). They highlight the following issues:

- Trained volunteers and CSO staff reported to feel uncomfortable when confronted with certain situations and sensitive questions, especially when they lacked legitimacy, back-up support and/or coaching from the MDG3 Fund grantee or the implementing partner organisation.
- Their job in referring GBV survivors was hampered when state services were not responsive, their voices not heard and injustice continued. Both evaluations stress the need for changes at institutional level that complement service delivery and for interventions to improve state responsiveness to cases of GBV.
- Advocacy efforts were not always well synchronised between national and grassroots level, e.g. in terms of focus of the advocacy campaigns.

**Civic engagement**
The final assessment reports indicate that the MDG3 Fund has contributed to increased civic engagement in the fight against GBV. It has done so through investing in organisational development and network building of a variety of organisations and by strengthening their lobby and advocacy capacity. The Fund has also contributed to civic engagement by enabling MDG3 Fund grantees to mainstream gender equality – and in particular the fight against GBV – into the core business of their respective implementing partners. Also, the MDG3 grantees in the sample that was reviewed reported that they had contributed to enhanced knowledge and reflection of (female) leaders in civil society organisations with regard to GBV. Results of these capacity development initiatives are however mixed. Evaluation reports show that the level of engagement in the fight against GBV of the organisations that were supported varied according to the context, character of the organisation and its overall organisational capacity.



The MDG3 Fund has contributed to *alliance building* and networking by financing a considerable number of activities, including the organisation of network events, conventions, improving websites and other types of information dissemination, and the training for members of alliances and networks. Nevertheless, most projects did not have a clear strategy for this purpose (an exception is WANEP). The effectiveness of these alliances and networks (for example in terms of having an impact on the public discourse around GBV), depends on their internal strength, cohesion and performance, which were not the focus of the grants. Several final assessment reports [49] and evaluation reports identify the following issues in this respect:

- Challenges with respect to the quality of the leadership (at individual level or at the level of the alliance or network);

[49] See e.g. Chaplin and Gianotten (2011) and Tadros (2011). Tadros (2011) describes several factors for successful donor support for coalitions, including: (a) ongoing investment in, and commitment to, the process of building internal cohesion and organisational and political capacity rather than focusing on delivery of project related outputs; (b) a recognition that coalitions need time to discuss the division of roles, appropriate strategies, relationships with government and non-governmental actors and consequently do not function well after 3-5 year funding cycles; (c) creating opportunities for joint action and peer to peer learning.

- Challenges concerning the lack of local ownership;
- Challenges related to internal governance and decision making processes;
- Insufficient sensitivity to the domestic political landscape and political affiliations of the actors;
- A focus on upward accountability to the donor rather than to the members.

**Improved lobby and advocacy**
Most MDG3 Fund projects have invested in advocacy through the organisation of (public) *awareness raising* campaigns and the organisation of *conferences* as a means for entering into debate with public officials and politicians. The evaluation shows that advocacy strategies were mostly based on research, which was done by universities or research institutes on e.g. the (non) application of the national and international legal framework to fight GBV and/or on documenting GBV in practice (different forms of GBV, culture of impunity, etc.).

The MDG3 Fund has supported two types of awareness raising campaigns, i.e. those aimed at changing social norms and harmful traditional practices (examples are the WE CAN campaign of Oxfam GB and CREA, see text box 4) and general awareness raising on the manifestation of GBV.



**Text box 4** *Addressing social norms to fight GBV in Bangladesh*

**Oxfam GB – WE CAN End Violence Against Women Campaign South Asia (Bangladesh)**
The WE CAN campaign aims at ending domestic violence against women and is currently implemented in 15 countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka in South Asia. The campaign was initiated by Oxfam but is coordinated by national WE CAN secretariats and implemented through a platform of civil society organisations, individuals, institutions and others. The MDG3 Fund contributed to the second phase of the campaign in South Asia (equivalent to 10% of total campaign costs).

In Bangladesh, where the WE CAN campaign was launched in 2004, it is fundamentally a mass campaign. It focuses on challenging and changing the prevailing social attitudes, behaviour and practices that maintain and promote domestic violence against women by mobilizing diverse individuals and communities. The core strategy is to bring about personal, voluntary and self-propelled change at the individual level – ordinary men, women and young people who commit to changing themselves and then bring change to at least ten other people in their spheres of influence. These individuals are the so-called ‘change makers’. The campaign is built on the premise that people change, and that people can change people. It does not prescribe actions, but offers people an idea, i.e. that violence against women is not normal, not acceptable and must end.

At the time of the evaluation visit in 2014, the campaign covered 55 of the 64 districts of Bangladesh with more than 10 million registered change makers (against 20 million planned). In total 140 WE CAN alliances at district level were active, involving change makers, and large numbers of implementing NGOs, educational institutions, local government representatives, etc. Each year, 50% of the implementing NGOs are trained on dealing with GBV, institutional capacity building, local mobilisation, voluntarism, etc. About 50% of the trained change makers are men.

The external evaluation report (Raab (2011)) describes that there has been a 'significant deepening of change among 62% of the change makers, while 33% show some deepening of change.[50] The remaining 5% demonstrated only having increased their awareness.

Changes were especially observed where change makers were intensively supported over a long period of time.[51] Change in knowledge, attitude and behaviour was more explicit and deeper among women than men. Observed and improved GBV attitude was correlated with increased levels of exposure to all four types of media used, i.e. general media, one-to-one personal interaction, community based campaigning and print materials.

WE CAN has shown it is possible to change deeply entrenched attitudes, although not all attitudes have changed, even amongst the change makers. The evaluation noticed contradictions and ambivalence. Even within a family defined as violence free, 27% of change makers thought a woman should not go out without the husband's permission, and almost 20% still thought it was acceptable that a man would abuse his wife occasionally.

A limitation of the approach was that adolescent change makers were considered as too junior to speak up and to request certain behaviour in the community or from the police. Also in general, change makers claimed to have no social identity, to be not sufficiently recognised by local authorities and police.

*Total MDG3 grant for the project: EUR 2,300,000*
*Total MDG3 grant for Bangladesh: EUR 260,574 (11%)*



[50] To qualify for 'significant deepening' change, change makers must articulate a clear understanding of various forms and contexts of GBV and present evidence for continuous efforts to reduced GBV and influence others.

[51] In the district where the project was implemented more intensely and completely, the evaluation found positive differences between women and men residing in the implemented and non-implemented sites in relation to both gender and intra-marital violence attitudes. Both men and women's GBV attitudes have improved, but women's have improved more. 9% to 16% of women in the intervention villages reported no longer being subjected to intra-marital violence in comparison to women residing in the control group.

Project evaluations reports show that the MDG Fund has allowed developing and upscaling the social norms interventions. They judge that these interventions were of good quality. They also indicate that combined individual and community dialogues with larger multi-media campaigns were effective in contributing to enhanced knowledge on GBV and changing attitudes at household and community level.[52]

Other MDG3 projects also invested in multi-media awareness raising campaigns, but did so without individual and community dialogues discussing social norms and cultural practices. Grantees have invested in such campaigns, which were sometimes limited in time, the organisation of conferences and workshops and dissemination of reports to a variety of target groups (general public, civil society organisations, civil servants, etc.). Results of these campaigns are not documented, but given the challenges the social norms interventions face, the effectiveness of these stand-alone general awareness raising activities on changing cultural beliefs and norms can be questioned.

*National and international conferences* were an important ingredient of the advocacy strategies. Reports were presented and discussed during these conferences and contributed to improved knowledge and awareness on GBV among leaders of civil society organisations and politicians. The events also resulted in greater visibility of the organisation/network. Interviewees made clear that participation in these conferences has encouraged civil society organisations to undertake lobby and advocacy actions at the local level.



There are no evaluation reports which give an appreciation of the effect of the advocacy interventions. This makes it difficult to judge whether they have indeed helped to keep the issue of GBV on the national and international agenda and have contributed to a changed discourse on GBV as is often assumed.

Issues regarding the advocacy interventions include the following: (i) the extent to which powerful decision makers who could indeed make a difference were targeted is not known; and (ii) it is not clear to what extent the conferences were strategically planned in perspective of a political agenda and a thorough identification of opportunities and drivers for change. For example, similar strategies seem to have been deployed in more open and conducive political environment and in closed political authoritarian environments, while in the latter context policy influencing heavily relies on informal relationships rather than strictly formal citizen-state engagements and 'formal' faces of advocacy (conferences, media advocacy) play a secondary role (Tadros (2011)).

Apart from investing in advocacy, six MDG3 grantees were also involved in *direct policy influencing* on concrete GBV and/or peace and security issues. They have given advice to governments in the form of concrete policy recommendations. For example, ACM has developed – in collaboration with its member organisations – recommendations for the new law on GBV and domestic violence in Bolivia that was adopted in 2012. The focus is now on the enforcement of the law. Proposals were drafted on the funding that is required for implementation of the law and ACM contributed to the sensitisation of (female) judges.

[52] See Oxfam GB (2012), CREA (undated), and Bhatla and Achyut (2011).

Forms of *activism* are only reported in four projects but it is well possible that also other organisations participated in demonstrations, rallies and community based activism, however without reporting this to the grantee and the MDG3 Fund.

### Outcome realised – enabling environment

The results accomplished by MDG3 Fund projects which addressed GBV are mixed. Successful projects have contributed to important changes in the socio-political environment, enabling the fulfilment of women's rights and contributing to women empowerment. These changes are related to:

- putting GBV on the political agenda and contributing to a changed discourse
- addressing social norms and cultural harmful practices, and
- contributing to laws that protect women's rights.

**Changed discourse**

All MDG3 Fund grantees from the sample reported to have contributed to a changed discourse on GBV among the direct target groups of their interventions, including community leaders, civil society organisations, civil servants and policy makers. Whether increased recognition of GBV has indeed translated into changed attitudes and behaviour is, however, not known.



**Changed social norms and cultural practices**

Four MDG3 projects of the sample have targeted dominating social norms, harmful cultural beliefs and practices and were implemented in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Southern Africa.[53] Three of these interventions were externally evaluated. [54] The evaluation reports share the following observations:

- The most important outcome is related to enhanced knowledge of GBV among men and women, e.g. in terms of women's rights and how to claim these rights. However, this enhanced knowledge does not automatically result in changed attitude and behaviour, in particular among men.
- With regard to domestic violence, no significant changes were reported on (i) the justification of violence among men and women (e.g. violence is seen as acceptable in case of lack of discipline); (ii) men accepting GBV as normal; and (iii) men and women remaining silent and not wanting the community to interfere in cases of domestic violence. What is more, even a deterioration in men's attitude could be observed in some communities (e.g. India).
- No changes were reported in the number of people willing to take action while witnessing acts of violence by seeking help from police, women's group, talking to neighbours, or taking legal action. Main reasons for refraining to do so were of fear of

53 Breakthrough, CREA, Oxfam GB and SafAIDS.

54 Oxfam GB (2012); CREA (undated); and Bhatla and Achyut (2011).

loss of reputation and/or community backlash.[55] A main reason for women not being able to successfully claim their rights was a state infrastructure that was unable to provide adequate health, social, psychological and legal services to GBV survivors.

Regarding changes in harmful practices [56] (e.g. the preference for sons over daughters in India and widow cleansing in Mozambique), enhanced knowledge and changed attitude could be observed among the people directly involved in the projects such as human rights advocates and traditional community leaders. They have used different platforms to address and challenge these practices. While reports mention success stories, they also draw attention to resistance of community groups and/or families that find it difficult to change these practices (see text box 5).

**Text box 5** *Addressing GBV and community backlash in India*

**Breakthrough Trust – Promoting Action against Discrimination, Abuse, and Violence (PADAV) – the Stopping Point (India)**
In 2007-8, Breakthrough initiated the Bell Bajao (Ring the Bell) campaign in India which urged bystanders to speak up and take action against domestic violence, making it an issue of community responsibility rather than merely a private family matter. The specific aim of Bell Bajao was to bring men and boys to the forefront as partners taking action against violence within the community. The second phase of the Bell Bajao campaign, entitled 'Promoting Action against Discrimination, Abuse and Violence (PADAV), was funded with the help of the MDG3 Fund. It included the use of multimedia messaging and a community/youth leadership training programme. As an independent evaluation of the MDG3 project pointed out, increasing awareness and confidence among women to speak out against GBV is not enough. Especially not when the community is unlikely to support those women who are speaking out. Rather, an external evaluation (Bhatla and Achyut (2011)) found that in a reaction to the enhanced voice of women, men were increasingly justifying domestic violence and perceived it as a private matter, and stated that women should remain silent. Such community backlash can seriously affect the outcome of a project and contribute to a deterioration of local social norms.

*Total MDG3 grant for the project: EUR 967,846*



**Changes in the policy environment**
Over the last decade, many countries have introduced legal frameworks respecting women's human rights: women's rights were included in the Constitution, family laws, laws on domestic violence and other laws that protect the rights of women. Although many MDG3

[55] As was observed in the evaluation of the CREA project: 'It has been established in literature that the social norms that sanction the use of discipline and punishment by man to keep his family often underlie domestic violence. It can't be automatically assumed that just by saying violence is unacceptable that these norms will easily shift'.

[56] CREA (undated) and SafAIDS (2011a): 31.

Fund grantees have contributed to these developments in the past, nowadays they have to fight backlash, regressive laws and policy shifts that seriously jeopardise the gender equality gains that they have fought for over many decades.

When assessing the outcomes of advocacy and policy influencing, the complexity of these processes needs to be taken into account. The fact that pathways are erratic and difficult to predict, plus the fact that in many instances there is no linear causal relationship between grantees' actions and the policy change itself does not permit attributing any results achieved to the MDG3 Fund alone. Still, of the thirteen GBV projects in the sample, three projects have contributed to changes in the legal framework on GBV:

- Development of implementation guidelines for the Act on Domestic Violence in Bangladesh (Oxfam GB);
- Development of National Action Plans to implement UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security in eight countries (WANEP)[57];
- Successful protests against the Indecent dressing Bill in Nigeria (grantees of AWDF).

Ten of the thirteen MDG3 projects have furthermore advocated for the implementation of existing laws, by documenting their non-application and/or by training of civil servants (in particular juridical staff) and lawyers the application of these laws. Local successes that were realised by supported civil society organisations, though not systematically documented, include:



- Appointment of protection officers and allocation of budgets to fight GBV at local level; establishment of women's courts (Breakthrough, India);
- Improved capacity of traditional crisis centres to deal with GBV cases respecting sexual orientation and gender identity (CREA, India);
- Integration of the 'WE CAN' approach in public institutions and local government that started implementing the Act on Domestic Violence (Oxfam GB, Bangladesh);
- Development of a gender manual for security personnel accepted in Sierra Leone (UAFC);
- Development of GBV action plans for 141 local councils in 10 Southern African countries (Gender Links);
- The project of WANEP resulted in the recruitment of 28 women lawyers, 12 women magistrates and 6 women defence attorneys in the Bandundu Province in DRC in 2010, where there were only 2 women lawyers and no women magistrates or defence attorneys before.

### Outcome realised – women's empowerment

Of the 13 MDG projects studied only the social norms interventions have directly contributed to women's empowerment at individual and collective level. Other interventions have contributed to empowerment at collective level.

#### Individual level

The evaluation reports covering social norms interventions point to evidence of changes in the understanding of GBV and in the attitudes towards responding and taking action to stop

[57] Liberia, Ivory Coast, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, DRC.

violence. More women have started to defy most forms of violence and are willing to speak out, look for help and/or accept family and/or community interventions in case of domestic violence. Violence is not perceived as a private matter anymore.

However, to what extent this actually happens will depend on their personality and the socio-political, cultural and economic context in which they live. Moreover, there was considerable variation in the types of interventions implemented and the intensity and duration of intervention exposure. The evaluation reports stress that better knowledge and increased awareness do not automatically lead to changes in action; Bhatla and Achyut underline in this respect that '(there) is a need for continued action to successfully bridge the gap between individual transformation and sustained action at the community level; between normative change and structural response' (Bhatla and Achyut (2011).

The social norms interventions have also encouraged individual women to participate in the awareness raising campaigns, have given them access to training and workshops and women and girl groups were formed, thus strengthening their position to fight GBV at individual or community level (see also text box 6).

**Text box 6** *Example of women's empowerment at the individual level in Mozambique*



**SafAIDS – Confronting Cultural Practices: Beliefs and Customary Laws to Promote Gender Equality and Prevent Gender Based Violence against Women and Girls in Southern Africa (Mozambique)**

Mozambique was among the five countries where the SafAIDS project was implemented. Central to the project was a methodology developed by SafAIDS to deal with harmful cultural practices, beliefs and laws related to HIV/aids and GBV. This methodology, which is called 'Changing the River's Flow', is based on a cascade model of training of community based volunteers, community dialogues and door-to-door awareness visits. SafAIDS worked together with local CBOs with ample knowledge of the local situation and a network of local volunteers. In Mozambique, the project specifically addressed two local harmful practices related to HIV/aids and GBV:

- *Kutchinga/pitakufa* (widow cleansing). This practice demands that a widow has to be 'cleansed' of the spirit of her former husband by having intercourse with a male relative in-law (condom use is discouraged to make sure the cleansing is effective). In the event that the cleansing is not done, it is believed that more members from the same family will also die.
- Polygamy, which is common throughout rural Mozambique, even though it is not recognised by law. Wives are seen as a labour force for farming, which made having many wives (and children) an attractive option, especially in rural areas.

Using the SafAIDS manual for the 'Changing the River's Flow' methodology, the four implementing CBOs were able to create understanding of and awareness among community and traditional leaders on these harmful practices. Community members were exposed to alternative, non-sexual ways of widow cleansing and have become aware of the linkages with the HIV/aids epidemic and polygamy.

In the SafAIDS' report on best practices (SafAIDS (2011a)) female beneficiaries are quoted about increased awareness and the fact that they speak out against the practice of widow cleansing: 'As a woman, the society would always blame you for the death of your husband as if you would have asked for his death. This would violate your rights of freedom and interaction as a woman with other family members and community until kutchinga was performed on you.' Interviews in Mozambique confirmed this increased knowledge of harmful cultural practices and women speaking out against it.

*Total MDG3 budget for the project: EUR 2,740,800*
*Total MDG3 budget for Mozambique: EUR 108,000 (3.9%)*



**Collective level**
Desk study and field visits show that the MDG3 Fund projects involved in strengthening civic engagement, general awareness raising, and lobby and advocacy have strengthened community based organisations and female leadership in advocating for women's rights and the implementation of the laws to fight GBV. Projects of e.g. ACM, UAF and AWDF were also able to bridge the gap between the policy discourse and grassroots women linking local civil society organisations of women with national, regional and international level actions.

In the final assessment reports of the MDG3 Fund projects anecdotal evidence is given of an increase in the number of GBV cases that was reported and a reduced incidence of domestic violence. However, they do not give insight into the factors that have contributed to these results.

## 3.3 Conclusions

The MDG3 Fund has made a contribution to changes in the enabling environment – both at the level of government and politics and among traditional (male) leaders – and to empowerment of women.

On the first issue, lobby and advocacy actions to inform policy makers and discuss violation of existing laws and GBV were instrumental in putting or keeping GBV on the political agenda in a range of countries. Nevertheless, though research-based, they lacked an analysis of the context specific drivers and opportunities for change that could have brought a stronger focus to their efforts.

On the second issue, there is anecdotal evidence of women feeling increasingly empowered because of the knowledge they gained on their rights and on what to do in case of violation of these rights. There is also anecdotal evidence of women feeling more confident to speak out and joining women's groups to strengthen their position in the fight against GBV. Only limited information is available on the involvement of men and changed attitude and behaviour regarding GBV among men.

Information at outcome level is only in a few cases substantiated by evidence. Evaluation reports describe that it remains difficult for women to stand up for their rights and fight GBV. They also stress that there is a need for continued action and for strengthening the link between normative change (social norms, cultural patterns) and structural interventions by a more responsive state.

The evaluation points at the following challenges confronting the MDG3 Fund projects:

- Grantees have aimed to mainstream GBV strategies into the core business of implementing partners and beneficiary organisations. Most capacity development interventions were 'event' and 'supply' driven and lacked a more strategic perspective;
- The link between interventions aimed at normative change and enhancing state responsiveness is often weak. Because of the prevailing lack of state responsiveness, women and men seeking help remained unsuccessful and prevention campaigns remain often the domain of civil society organisations;
- Only four of the thirteen projects assessed aimed at changing underlying cultural norms and harmful traditional practices that are the root causes of gender based violence and persisting culture of impunity. For these projects, results are shown where intensive and longer-term media campaigns were combined with individual and community dialogues.

4

# Participation and representation of women in national parliaments and political bodies

## 4.1 Setting the scene

Lack of voice prevents women from ensuring that their needs are taken into account in public goods and service delivery. This is likely to reinforce existing biases against women. To address this, the MDG3 Fund aimed at enhancing the participation and representation of women in national parliaments and formal political bodies at national and local level, such as community councils and commissions. As is evident from chapter two, 25 MDG3 projects (56%) were active in this domain. Except for the project of Just Associates, all of them were active also on other themes.[58]

Out of this overall portfolio, nine projects were assessed in-depth and three were visited in Egypt (WLP and V-Day Karama) and Mozambique (NIZA). In all these projects, enhancing women's political participation was part of strategies that aim at strengthening female leadership, increasing the number of women taking on leadership and decision-making roles at family, community and national level. Implementing partners have organised civic education, leadership and political participation training to realise this. Key characteristics are furthermore the following:

- The projects of UAFC, AWDF (see text box 7), and Isis-WICCE explicitly combined leadership building with shaping public opinion in order to accept women as political actors and to vote for women in public leadership and governance positions. Still, none of the projects collaborated with political parties, either in terms of advocating for the inclusion of women in their electoral lists or in terms of training of their female candidates.
- The projects of AWDF and WLP have directly supported female political candidates that participated in national elections by undertaking their training.
- Other projects above all envisaged the emergence of local female leadership, with as an indirect effect that some of the women who had been trained decided to participate at elections at local and/or national level.



Several MDG3 Fund grantees and their implementing partners have advocated for gender quotas in the past and reports show that some of them have continued to do so with support from the MDG3 Fund.[59] Informing men and women on the existing quota system is nowadays also part of their civic education programmes.

[58] In four cases the other theme was GBV, while NIZA and the Huairou Commission combined this theme with land rights. When political participation was linked to two other themes, the other themes were GBV and land rights, except for Gender Links combining political participation with GBV and employment.

[59] As is clear from e.g. Dekker (2012), such gender quota in political or local governance structures are often proposed as a way to enhance women's ability to participate in policymaking. They are now practiced in more than 100 countries.

**Text box 7** *Alternative strategies for the promotion of women's leadership in Nigeria*

**AWDF – Leadership, Innovation and Scaling Up: Strengthening the Capacity of African Women's Organisations and Movements (Nigeria)**

In addition to its focus on combating GBV, the African Women Development Fund (AWDF) used the MDG3 Fund to 'strengthen women's leadership to engage with political processes for the advancement and protection of women's rights in the area of political participation'. Leadership and representation of women outside the political arena were included as well. For example, one of the strategies applied by AWDF was to establish collaborations and partnerships with key actors from popular culture (music and film) to challenge negative stereotypes of women and to promote more progressive images of women in the film and music industry in Africa (Nollywood) (Awori (2011)).

*Total MDG3 grant for the project: EUR 5,570,071*



## 4.2 Effectiveness

Although eight of the nine projects from the sample were externally evaluated,[60] only two reports (Pittman and Lepillez (2013) and Kantelberg (2011)) provide data on the contribution of the project towards increased female leadership and political participation. The analysis of effectiveness is therefore mainly based on the information from the final assessment reports that were based on the grantees' final reports.

### Output realised

Outputs of the MDG3 Fund projects can be situated at two levels: (i) improved civic engagement by training organisations and individuals on civic education and political participation; (ii) lobby and advocacy interventions aimed at increasing female participation in governance processes. Table 12 presents the results for the three projects that were visited in Egypt and Mozambique.

60 The exception is V-Day Karama's MDG3 Fund project.

**Table 12 Strategies applied and results achieved related to enhanced political participation in Egypt and Mozambique**

| Grantee-project | Strategy | Output |
|---|---|---|
| WLP – together with its partner in Egypt (FWID) | **Civic engagement**<br>Training of NGO staff based on WLP developed curricula (manuals for political participation, leadership and use of information technology) and the integration of WLP training in participating NGOs.<br>**Lobby and advocacy**<br>Participation in advocacy campaigns: 'Claiming Equal Citizenship', 'Equality without reservation', CEDAW campaign Awareness raising on draft constitution in Egypt (through several NGO coalitions). | 243 NGO leaders trained (no sex disaggregated data).<br>120 organisations supported to conduct training and/or participate in campaigns and mobilise public support to enhance women's political participation. |
| V-Day Karama – together with its partner in Egypt (V-Day Karama Egypt) | **Civic engagement**<br>Political training and civic education for organisations.[61]<br>**Lobby and advocacy**<br>Supporting travel costs for women to participate in regional and international events. | CEDAW shadow report prepared and campaign for enacting CEDAW recommendations. |
| NIZA – together with its partner in Mozambique (ActionAid Mozambique) | **Civic engagement**<br>Training of women's leaders on district consultative council processes.<br>Organisation of a public forum on women's participation in local decision making bodies.<br>Financing travel costs of women to participate in meetings.<br>**Lobby and advocacy**<br>Organisation of dialogues with government officials and policy makers.<br>Lobby the government for the formation of a community committee for the approval of community projects. | 119 women trained and 574 women supported to participate in district consultative councils.<br>Target of 30% of women presence in 5 district consultative councils achieved.<br>167 local development projects approved by district consultative councils. |



### Civic engagement

As illustrated in the cases of WLP and NIZA (see the text boxes 8 and 9), the MDG3 Fund has contributed to strengthened female lleadership and better understanding of (local) governance processes. As illustrated by the NIZA case, it also contributed to increased participation of women in local decision making bodies. Training, peer learning and making tools and curricula available were the main approaches adopted. Organisations participating in training were further supported to participate in lobby and advocacy campaigns that advocated for increased women's political participation.

61 Not realised because of civil unrest at the time of project implementation ('Arab Spring').

**Text box 8** *Enhancing women's political participation in Egypt*

**The Women Learning Partnership (WLP) – Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women in Muslim Majority Societies (Egypt)**
WLP is an international NGO that works together with 20 partners in the global South, particularly in Muslim-majority societies. Its primary objectives are (i) to increase the number of women taking on leadership and decision-making roles at family, community, and national levels; and (ii) to improve the effectiveness of feminist movements in Muslim-majority societies by strengthening the capacity of its partners. The main strategy of WLP consists of the development of leadership training curricula, supporting capacity development of NGOs and undertaking advocacy, among others on women's political participation. Special attention is given to reaching out to youth. WLP's training curricula are based upon its concept of participatory leadership that emphasises egalitarian values, respectful communication and creation of shared meaning and goals for further democratic processes. Content analysis and interviews during the field visit made clear that this training is of high quality.

The MDG3 Fund has contributed to the further development, adaptation and implementation of these curricula in 15 countries, e.g. by incorporating case studies. It also supported the organisation of training, networking, advocacy and institutional capacity building.



35% of the MDG3 grant was transferred to WLP partners, including to FWID, an Egyptian NGO that supports over 120 community-based organisations. Using this grant, FWID has trained 243 NGO leaders from 10 NGOs on female leadership and political participation. During the training awareness raising campaigns were undertaken on e.g. voters' education and women's electoral rights. With support from WLP, FWID has started to offer more tailor made support and coaching to its partner organisations to strengthen their capacities in conducting lobby and advocacy campaigns, organising training, etc. The field visit has casted some doubt on whether FWID has indeed the technical capacity to do so. Moreover, trainees interviewed could not give concrete examples of results of the training for their organisations and pre-training capacity assessments of these organisations were not carried out.

The intervention in Egypt is not the most successful of the WLP interventions supported by the MDG3 Fund. The external evaluation report (Pittman and Lepillez (2013)) indicates that WLP accomplished more in other countries and makes reference to the contribution of WLP partners to legal and policy changes in WLP partner countries, enhanced participation of women in national parliaments, increased female leadership and strengthened partners conducting advocacy campaigns.

*Total MDG3 grant for the project: EUR 1,287,541*
*Total grant for FWID in Egypt: USD 39,000*

**Text box 9** *Enhancing women's participation in local governance in Mozambique*

**The Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NIZA – currently ActionAid) – Women's Land Rights in Southern Africa (WOLAR) project (Mozambique)**
The MDG3 Fund was the sole contributor to the WOLAR project, which was implemented by NIZA (now ActionAid) in Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. This project is an example of how projects have invested in strengthening women's leadership and participation in local governance bodies in the framework of a programme on enhancing women's access to land rights (also see chapter 6).[62]

One of its objectives in Mozambique was to achieve a minimum of 30% representation of women in District Consultative Councils (DCCs) in order to exert influence on local development process (including land rights for women). The approach consisted mainly of training women on DCC processes and supporting women participating in these Councils in the 6 project districts.

The target of 30% representation of women in the six districts was achieved. The external evaluation (Kachita (2012)) reported that through the project, women had learned about governance structures at district level and their right to participate in DCCs. They have indeed gained access to these Councils and have used this opportunity to influence them from within.[63] According to the evaluation, there are strong examples of changes in women's lives and economic benefits for women due to their increased decision-making power, but no evidence for this claim could be found. It moreover underlines that mobilizing political support should always come with follow-up strategies to solidify and institutionalise changes and to move from incidental and person/chief driven change to structural change in favour of women- and women's land rights. The report notes that while women's presence in a DCC is a good start, their participation is often tokenistic and passive. More was to be done to ensure that the women were also able to participate actively. Illiteracy emerged as a major obstacle to women's actual participation in these structures as appeared from the impact assessment conducted by ActionAid Mozambique in 2011.

*Total MDG3 grant for the project: EUR 3,039,950*
*Total MDG grant for Mozambique: EUR 665,538 (21%)*



[62] Training topics included: the organisation, composition and functioning of the DCC, mechanisms for creating a DCC, role of DCC members, working groups, how to mobilise participation and organise community consultation processes, how to design project to access local funds, management of local funds, and how to work with the government to solve demands related to the strategic, social and economic components of district plans.

[63] An example provided in project documents is the approval of special 'women's projects' at the level of the DCCs in Marracuene and Maganja Costa districts. These developments were labelled as a 'good start' in the evaluation report.

The evaluation reports show that short-term support for building local female leadership is insufficient to effectively change the nature and practice of such leadership and/or to effectively strengthen women's position and their meaningful involvement in local governance bodies once elected.

This is also evident from the evaluation of the Huairou Commission (Kantelberg (2011)), describing that the increased presence of women in local political bodies did not go hand-in-hand with women effectively influencing decision making. [64] Along the same lines, the final assessment report of the NIZA project highlights that skills building remained necessary to ensure women's effective participation in local decision making processes.

In the end, only three projects from the sample (ACM, Huairou Commission and NIZA) provided longer-term support to address this issue. They have:

- invested in participatory development of a local political agenda on gender equality and advised on how defend this at national level;
- provided technical support in developing policy proposals for discussion in local governance bodies;
- have given insight into the local process of planning and decision making; and
- have linked (female) politicians to grassroots women and human rights organisations, an example being the local-to-local dialogues that were supported by the Huairou Commission.



**Improved lobby and advocacy**

MDG3 grantees have above all contributed to strengthen *local* female leadership and their participation in local decision-making bodies. Only the projects of WLP, ACM and V-Day Karama were involved in lobby and advocacy to advance women's political participation in *national* parliaments and political bodies, however without involving political parties. ACM and V-Day Karama have amongst others advocated for introducing the 'zipper system' alternating male and female candidates in parliamentary elections. WLP has furthermore advocated for a women's quota for the Lower House of Parliament in Jordan, but remains an exception in this respect.

Four projects have made an effort to address the prevailing social and cultural norms concerning women's political participation. They have done so through awareness raising to promote women as political actors, mainly through mass media campaigns (Isis-WICCE, AWDF) and documenting and disseminating good practices of female leadership and political participation (AWDF, V-Day Karama, and WLP).

[64] The report states in this respect that '(authorities) and leaders do not want to give up their power and therefore significant attitudes and behaviours remain the major challenge for partners' progress in policy change. Partners explained that it is important to find leaders who will champion the cause of women's empowerment within the process. This was suggested by all interviewed, that there is a need to work both sides of the equation (that of grassroots women but also that of leaders, authorities and government)' (Kantelberg (2011)).

High illiteracy rates among grassroots women are regularly seen as a factor hampering their political participation. Only in case of the projects of the Huairou Commission and NIZA is it clear that literacy training was provided for women to address this issue.

### Outcome realised -enabling environment

No information is available on whether the MDG3 projects have indeed translated the achieved output into increased acknowledgement and acceptance of women as political actors. Many reports describe increased numbers of women in local and, to a lesser extent, national level politics as an indication that both women and men are increasingly accepting women's political role by voting for them. At the same time, the political structures themselves have altered little and women's meaningful contribution and influence on decision-making process remains a key issue, even when quota requirements are fulfilled.

### Outcome realised – female empowerment

#### Individual level

The evaluation reports indicate that training has contributed to better knowledge of women on their political rights, the policy environment, as well as election and local governance processes. They also mention that women have increased their confidence and have acquired leadership attitudes, describing changes in individual consciousness, beliefs and practices of women assuming leadership positions. As mentioned above, the MDG3 projects focused on building the skills of local women to take up leadership positions in community based organisations and/or local governance bodies. Some of these women have run for political office.

Various project reports refer to increased numbers of women participating in election campaigns resulting in more women taking a seat in local and national decision making bodies – but they all fail to specify numbers. Moreover, there is an attribution gap for such claims, as is also recognised in the WLP evaluation report (Pittman and Lepillez (2013)).[65]

#### Collective level

In addition to providing training on women's leadership and political participation, some support was given to (women's) organisations to participate in campaigns and to integrate civic education in their strategies. WLP, Huairou Commission and NIZA have supported women that were involved in political bodies as a group. They also formed communities of practice or learning groups where participants of leadership training can meet and share their views and experiences.



[65] The report observes in this respect: 'This evaluation has identified a number of legal and policy changes that have taken place as a direct or indirect result of WLP activities. (...) There has been a steady increase in the proportion of women in national politics in a number of the partner countries (11 of the 12 countries). While this change may not be attributed directly or exclusively to WLP partner activities, it is highly likely that WLP partners contributed to the national advocacy campaigns for enhanced female political participation and representation, or to the electoral campaigns of individual female candidates' (Pittman and Lepillez (2013): 18).

The link between increased female political participation and policy outcomes in favour of female preferred public goods such as drinking water, health and education, is often claimed in final assessment reports but never substantiated with evidence.

## 4.3 Conclusions

Strengthening political participation of women was the core business of only one MDG3 Fund project. In all other cases, projects have primarily invested in strengthening local women's leadership as part of a strategy for enhancing women's voice and claiming capacity, either in relation to addressing GBV or to increasing women's access to land. Political parties were not targeted by the MDG3 Fund interventions in the sample.

The projects assessed for this priority theme have primarily contributed to increased participation of women in local governance bodies. Partners and beneficiary organisations of the MDG3 Fund grantees have started to integrate civic education programmes into their core business and have conducted lobby and advocacy campaigns to create awareness among the general public on the role of women as political actors.



Female leadership has emerged: women have gained knowledge on their political rights and governance processes, have participated in election campaigns, they feel more confident and have acquired leadership attitudes and positions. Occasionally, an indirect effect of these interventions was enhanced political participation of women, mainly in local governance bodies, but only few projects have invested in supporting these women. Only a few grantees have worked on changing social norms and attitudes among men. Meaningful involvement of women in decision-making bodies is still challenged in many places. This shows that longer-term support of female leaders that addresses these norms and persisting patterns of male leadership is required.

The link between increased female political participation and policy outcomes in favour of female preferred public goods is often claimed in narrative reports but never substantiated with evidence.

# 5

# Employment and equal opportunities on the labour market

## 5.1 Setting the scene

The World Development Report 2012 documents how, despite increased labour force participation, gender gaps in earnings and productivity persist across all forms of economic activity. Women may be restricted in their access to labour market opportunities due to lack of capacities or skills. Alternatively they may face time shortages due to their reproductive roles or they may be restricted in their freedom to move and act independently. They are also affected by discriminatory practices in markets and formal institutions.

To address this multitude of constraints, policies and programmes to promote female employment and equal opportunities for women in the formal and informal labour market can intervene at various levels (Dekker (2012)).

Such interventions can either aim at:

- reducing the burden of reproductive responsibilities (provision of child care, parental leave);
- improving access to the formal labour market (active labour market policies, recruitment services, affirmative action, strengthening women's networks, labour laws, family laws, social protection programmes); and
- widening the scope for informal employment by introducing new technologies, improving access to credit, providing (business or vocational) training and/or advocating for social protection.



Fourteen MDG3 Fund projects were active in this domain (31% of the entire portfolio). Three were included in the sample, i.e. two international organisations grounded in the labour movement (ITUC and WIEGO), and the South African NGO Gender Links. [66] The implementing partner of ITUC in Mozambique was visited.

The projects of ITUC and WIEGO focused on employment alone; the Gender Links project focused on employment and GBV. The ITUC project focused on formal employment, i.e. women in service sectors in 14 countries and aimed at strengthening trade unions.
The WIEGO project, operational in 47 countries, aimed at strengthening member-based organisations involved in protecting the rights of (women) workers, domestic and informal workers and street vendors. Both organisations have used the funding for the implementation of specific projects in several countries. They have used the grant to strengthen gender sensitivity of their local partners and affiliates in order to enable them to better defend the

[66] The grantees of the other 11 projects addressing this theme were international organisations, with no links to the labour movement or trade unions, although they did include gender equality on the labour market as part of a broader agenda. Nine of them have implemented lobby and advocacy activities to influence the development and/or application of domestic labour laws and the ratification of ILO conventions. Some projects have monitored the implementation of social security or affirmative action programmes or the implementation of existing laws that facilitate equal opportunities of men and women on the labour market. Three projects assisted women in claiming their rights regarding equal opportunities. Only the project of ACORD was directly involved in the implementation of economic programmes (in the informal sector) supporting women in accessing credits, new technologies and entrepreneurship skills development (targeting victims of GBV).

rights of women workers and to support them in claiming their rights. ITUC and WIEGO also conducted research and were involved in lobby and advocacy. The project of Gender Links focused specifically on employment equity in the media and promoted the development of gender policies in media.

## 5.2 Effectiveness

### Output realised

Table 13 summarises the information on strategies and outputs realised by the three projects in the sample, distinguishing three main elements: service delivery, civic engagement and lobby and advocacy.



**Table 13** Strategies applied and resuts achieved related to equal employment opportunities for grantees from the sample (n = 3)

| Grantee-project | Strategy | Output |
|---|---|---|
| ITUC – together with its partner in Mozambique (OTM) | **Service delivery**<br>• Development of a local wage indicator website.<br>**Civic engagement**<br>• Community and workplace visits to inform workers on their rights;<br>• Face to face meetings;<br>• Information dissemination through social media.<br>**Lobby and advocacy**<br>• Awareness raising campaigns on labour rights;<br>• Research reports contributing to ILO and trade union discussions on minimum wage setting;<br>• Lobbying ILO convention ratification 183 on maternity leave and 189 on domestic work. | Operational websites in different countries;<br>985 women reached in Mozambique and 43,736 in the total of 14 countries;<br>3,253 women reached in face to face meetings in Mozambique (over 128 thousand in 14 countries). |
| WIEGO | **Civic engagement**<br>• Establishment of networks of domestic workers' organisations through consultation meetings, conferences and workshops;<br>• Workshops for domestic workers and informal workers (on fair trade, organisational health services, negotiation, social security, public speaking);<br>• Capacity development for membership organisations involved in fair trade.<br>**Lobby and advocacy**<br>• Awareness raising campaigns on domestic work;<br>• Research on ILO convention for domestic workers, fair trade, Occupational Health Services;<br>• Support lobby and advocacy campaigns; Organise policy dialogues. | Establishment of:<br>• A new international domestic workers network and of a new regional network of 12 domestic workers organisations in Africa;<br>• New national member based organisations.<br>All these networks are involved in lobby and advocacy campaigns.<br><br>People trained:<br>• 870 domestic workers;<br>• 7,500 female fair trade producers;<br>• members of 7 member based organisations;<br>• 240 people on organisational health services in Thailand and Ghana. |

| Grantee-project | Strategy | Output |
|---|---|---|
| Gender Links | **Lobby and advocacy**<br>• Research on gender equity in the media;<br>• Workshops for media practitioners;<br>• Development of gender policies for newsrooms. | In 12 Southern African countries, 84 newsrooms adopted a gender policy and 28 newsrooms were in the process of drafting such a policy that is to improve access of female workers to these newsrooms. [67] |

**Improved service delivery**

Improved service delivery was only part of the ITUC project that invested in the development of local wage indicator websites containing information on minimum wages and labour laws. The idea is that this information will enable women workers to take more informed decisions (claiming rights, career building, negotiating minimum wage, etc.). The ITUC evaluation report refers to more visitors of these websites; in the case of Mozambique, the website was visited by over 57 thousand people. The total number of visitors in all 14 countries was close to 5.3 million.

**Civic engagement**

The MDG3 Fund has contributed to an increased number of female workers who are organised. Thinking was that stronger organisations with more members would be able to defend the rights of (women) workers and to provide quality services to their members.



It has done so through:

- The establishment of new member based organisations, such as 'HomeNet' in Thailand which has become a national member based organisation for domestic workers with close to 3,300 members (WIEGO).
- Promotion of membership of existing labour organisations. In the case of ITUC, reports mention an estimated 15% increase in the number of female trade union members (though without providing further detail).
- The strengthening of existing networks of member based organisations. This includes the international network of domestic workers covering 47 countries and involving 12 elected regional coordinators and a regional network of 12 domestic workers organisations in Africa with 19,000 members (WIEGO).

To equip them for negotiations with governments and employers, the WIEGO project has trained and informed representatives of domestic or informal female workers on a broad range of topics.[68] Strategic plans and joint action plans were developed to prepare national advocacy strategies and to lobby international institutions, such as ILO and the World Fair Trade Organization.

[67] Whether this has actually happened is, however, not known.

[68] These include labour laws, rights of domestic and informal workers, challenges related to occupational health services for informal workers, social security schemes for domestic workers, etc.

In the formal sector, ITUC has undertaken awareness raising among trade unions on different women workers' issues, such as maternity leave, balancing work and family, and minimum wages. Through the organisation of workshops and work floor visits these unions were supported to implement awareness raising campaigns on women worker's issues. They were also stimulated to lobby for national labour laws protecting minimum wage, maternity leave, etc. From the narrative and evaluation reports it appears that trade unions have become more sensitive to women workers' issues.

The ITUC and WIEGO projects have also dealt with institutional development and networking and enhancing the capacity for lobby and advocacy. To a lesser extent they have tackled organisational development. The field visit to Mozambique demonstrated that the ITUC project's contribution to strengthening the interest for and strategies to reach out to women workers had been limited. Main causes identified were: limited budget, short project duration and the project's orientation on website development and other online activities.

The narrative reports on the ITUC and WIEGO projects show that project implementation varied between countries and partners (with good to very limited implementation). It remains, however, unclear to what extent the partners at country level have really integrated their newly gained knowledge and skills into their own strategies and action plans. It was also impossible to assess whether the projects' institutional development efforts have indeed resulted in better and sustainable service delivery and improved advocacy. The same finding concerns the numbers of women finally reached through the networks and member based organisations that were reported in the project evaluation reports (Achtell (2012) and Ledriz (2012)).



**Improved lobby and advocacy**

As mentioned above, WIEGO and ITUC were involved in lobbying international organisations. With support of the MDG3 Fund they were able to mobilise their members/ affiliates (i) to lobby the ILO on ILO convention 189 on decent work for domestic workers (see also text box 10), (ii) to lobby national governments for the ratification of ILO convention 183 on maternity leave, and (iii) to raise awareness at the level of ILO and trade unions on the importance of minimum wage setting.

**Text box 10** *Successes of lobby strategies by domestic workers*

**Women in Informal Employment: Globalisation and Organizing (WIEGO) – Investing in Equality for Working Poor Women**
The importance of the MDG3 Fund in relation to the lobby on ILO convention 189 is underlined in the WIEGO evaluation report: 'it cannot be understated how much effort, on several fronts, seems to have been required to achieve this. Cited as the key factor in achieving this success was the active involvement of domestic workers themselves throughout the process and at all levels. (...) ILO staff could not recall when it happened the last time that the workers of the sector for which an ILO Convention is negotiated, have been part of the negotiation process' (Achtell (2012): 10). This active involvement of domestic workers was made possible through the support of WIEGO and the International Domestic Workers Network, which was established with funds from the MDG3 Fund.

*Total MDG3 grant for the project: EUR 1,725,357*

Both WIEGO and ITUC have furthermore:



- launched lobby and advocacy campaigns that were taken up at national level in various countries.
- organised training on lobby and advocacy for their members.
- supported national labour organisations and trade unions with information and campaigning material.
- organised public awareness raising campaigns on women workers rights and/or rights of domestic workers, mainly through conferences and media campaigns.

The member organisations of the MDG3 grantees also enabled policy dialogues between policy makers and domestic/informal workers. At the same time, none of them, and this also concerns the other eleven projects active in this domain, has invested in creating awareness and changing social and cultural norms that are the root causes of discriminatory practices and restrict women to move and act independently.

## Outcome realised – enabling environment

### Improved labour legislation
Lobbying international organisations is at the core of the strategies of two of the MDG3 Fund grantees assessed. The MDG3 Fund strengthened the interest of international organisations such as ILO and World Fair Trade organisations for the main issues women are confronted with. This has contributed to following results[69] (i) adoption of the ILO convention 189 and the accompanying recommendation on decent work for domestic workers in 2011 (WIEGO, ITUC); (ii) discussion followed by approval of a gender resolution by the World Fair Trade organisations (WIEGO).

69 As documented in the final assessments for the MDG3 Fund and the evaluation reports.

ITUC's lobby for ratification of the ILO conventions 183 and 189 is still on-going and success remains limited so far and moreover difficult to attribute to the MDG3 Fund alone: (i) since 2000, 29 countries have ratified ILO convention 183 on maternity leave of which only 4 countries are on the OECD/DAC list; (ii) ILO convention 189 on domestic workers is ratified by 14 countries (since 2011) of which 12 countries form the OECD/DAC list (www.ilo.org).

At local level, trade unions and member-based organisations were supported to advocate and lobby for labour legislation protecting women workers' rights. Some successes have been reported, to which members and partners of MDG3 Fund grantees have contributed. This includes the promulgation of the home workers-protection act in Thailand (WIEGO) and improved labour legislation for young women workers in six countries, i.e. South Africa, Zimbabwe, Indonesia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus (ITUC).

**Improved working environment**

Only anecdotal evidence is available on whether lobby and advocacy campaigns have resulted in improvements in the working environment for the projects' respective target groups. In Thailand, for example, 800,000 informal workers were able to access social security schemes, pension and maternity leave (WIEGO). Improved workplace safety for informal workers is also reported in the WIEGO evaluation report but no details are given. There is no information on whether existing labour laws are implemented by government and respected by employers.



**Increased awareness on women workers' issues**

One of the main results of the above two MDG3 Fund projects is their contribution to growing awareness within trade unions, member based organisations and labour organisations on women workers' issues. According to ITUC's final project report, this has resulted, among others in trade unions negotiating gender related clauses in collective bargaining agreements in nine countries, including e.g. Angola, Ukraine and Indonesia.

### Outcome realised – female empowerment

WIEGO and ITUC have invested in institutional strengthening of their members, through networking and improving their lobby and advocacy capacity. They had only an indirect effect on empowerment of women workers as this depends on the performance of each individual member organisation. However, due to the lack of systematic monitoring, the evaluation was unable to gain substantiated insight into changes in women's empowerment. The final assessment reports present some anecdotal evidence in this respect. They describe that women workers have increased their knowledge and understanding of their rights. In turn, this knowledge has contributed to their enhanced self-confidence and self-esteem and helped to speak out and negotiate for e.g. the payment of minimum wages, access to social protection schemes, better working conditions, etc. Women have furthermore joined organisations of domestic workers and informal workers; also the trade unions experienced increased female membership and increased women in leadership positions.[70]

[70] PwC in this respect makes reference to e.g. Zimbabwe where ITUC partners saw the number of young women in decision making or leadership position increase from 5 to 26% of between 2008 and 2011 (PwC (2012): 4).

It is not documented to what extent these results have contributed to a better social and political position of women and what the longer-term effects (may) have been. The WIEGO evaluation report mentions that women informal producers have gained understanding of the fact they are workers with rights who make a valuable contribution to their household income, community and national economies and that in some cases had improved gender relations (Achtell (2012): 15). However, it does not elaborate further on this issue.

## 5.3 Conclusions

Most MDG3 Fund projects that were active in area of employment and equal opportunities on the labour market implemented lobby and advocacy activities. These were used to influence the development, adoption and/or application of international conventions and national labour laws.

Examining the MDG3 Fund project portfolio shows that:

- not much was invested in creating employment opportunities, with only one project providing direct employment support in the form of skills training, facilitating access to credit, strengthening female entrepreneurship;
- none of the projects has challenged prevailing social norms and discriminatory practices that restrict women's access to the labour market;
- none of the projects contributed to reducing women's constraints related to their reproductive responsibilities marketing the household; and
- only two projects were actually embedded in the labour movement and/or collaborated with labour oriented civic society organisations and trade unions and focused on organising female workers and enhancing their collective bargaining capacity.



The projects assessed have contributed to increased awareness of women worker's issues and needs among labour oriented organisations, trade unions and among policy makers. They have also contributed to the establishment of (networks) of member based organisations organising domestic and informal workers. The focus in this respect was on institutional strengthening of networks and confederations, not so much on supporting organisational development processes at national level.

In the end, it is not clear to what extent this networking has contributed to improved service delivery to the members of these networks or to sustainable integration of new approaches and tools in these organisations' way of working. It is also not evident that increased awareness has translated into concrete actions and initiatives to promote labour legislation or healthy working conditions, or in terms of increased access of women to the labour market.

6

# Property and inheritance rights for women

## 6.1 Setting the scene

The importance of secure property rights for economic development is increasingly recognised, also when setting up the MDG3 Fund. The following paragraphs deal specifically with land rights since, in practice, all 13 MDG3 projects in this particular thematic area focused on securing access to land for women (sometimes in combination with other assets).

The literature makes clear that women are often disadvantaged in both statutory and customary land tenure systems. They have weak property or contractual rights to land. Even when legislation is in place, a lack of legal knowledge and weak implementation may limit women's ability to exercise their rights. This situation is reinforced by prevailing norms, beliefs, and traditions, which are very context specific.

Granting property rights to women means that they have an enforceable claim on the property and are free to rent, bequeath or sell it. Ownership of assets in the hands of women may enhance their possibilities to undertake more remunerative activities, either because property rights allow for investments that may enhance productivity, or because they are able to obtain credit (land as collateral) and start off-farm businesses, or because they are able to rent or sharecrop their land and generate a (higher) income that can be invested in off-farm activities (Dekker (2012)). The literature also points at a link between increased productivity and women's empowerment. Increased productivity leads to increased self-confidence, a stronger position in the household and the community and increased mobility. This strengthened position may give women better access to information regarding new technologies and innovations, make them stronger in negotiations with external providers, etc., thus making it possible for them to further increase productivity.



A total of 13 MDG3 funded projects (29%) undertook interventions to increase access of women to land and secure land tenure.[71] Three of these projects were included in the sample for this evaluation, of which the NIZA project was visited in Mozambique.[72]

These 13 MDG3 Fund projects have undertaken (a combination of) the following interventions:

- Awareness raising campaigns on the rights of women to land and advocacy campaigns in order to integrate secure land tenure for women in the constitution, land laws, family laws and agrarian laws. These approaches were combined with support for civil society organisations, in particular women's groups, to advocate for women's access to and control over land (13 projects).
- Financial support for women's associations to acquire land (3 projects).

[71] According to the assessment memorandums, 14 MDG3 grantees intervened on the issue of land rights. Assessing the reports made clear that one project in fact did not implement specific activities in this field.

[72] Out of these three, the Huairou Commission and NIZA linked the issue of land rights with political participation; in the case of ACM it was linked with political participation and GBV.

- Training of paralegal staff to intervene in land related conflicts and/or to provide legal advice to assist women in claiming their rights (4 projects).
- Support to improve women's knowledge on sustainable farming in order to augment agricultural production.

## 6.2 Effectiveness

All three MDG3 funded projects in the sample that worked in this priority area were evaluated externally. Only the NIZA project had a strong focus on improving land rights and its evaluation report (Kachita (2012)) provides details on the results of the intervention on increased access to land for women. For the other two projects land rights featured among other priorities.

### Output realised

Table 14 gives a summary overview of the strategies pursued by the above mentioned three projects and what is known of the results accomplished under the headings of service delivery, civic engagement and lobby and advocacy in the area of women's land rights. [73]



**Table 14** Strategies applied and results achieved related to land rights for women from the sample (n = 3)

| Grantee-project | Strategy | Output [73] |
|---|---|---|
| NIZA – together with its partner in Mozambique (ActionAid Mozambique) | **Service delivery**<br>• Training of judges and paralegals;<br>• Training to improve agricultural productivity.<br>**Civic engagement**<br>• Women in women's groups / associations / training and exchange visits;<br>• Capacity development of ROSA (food security network);<br>• Provision of small grants.<br>**Lobby and advocacy**<br>• Research;<br>• Information disseminated (leaflets, t-shirts, media);<br>• Supporting advocacy activities. | • 31 judges, 62 community members and 268 paralegals (52% women) trained on women's land rights;<br>• 61 people (including 29 women) trained in conservation farming;<br>• 227 members of women's associations trained in management and leadership;<br>• ROSA strengthened at local, provincial and national level (structure, strategic planning, communication, linking, staff);<br>• 3 advocacy meetings on women's land rights at national and district level (235 participants);<br>• 60 women presented a rural women's declaration to the local governor and other government officials and 2,000 women participated in the international rural women's day;<br>• 109 women mobilised to advocate for right to food in the national law;<br>• Mass information campaigns implemented. |

73 Based on Kachita (2012), Kantelberg. (2011), and Chaplin & Gianotten (2011).

| Grantee-project | Strategy | Output [73] |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Huairou Commission[74] | **Civic engagement**<br>• Enhance female leadership of grassroots organisation;<br>• Training of grassroots organisations;<br>• Organisation of local to local dialogues between grassroots women and local government.<br>**Lobby and advocacy**<br>• Supporting lobby and advocacy campaigns of grassroots organisations with small grants. | • 6 women groups (180 women) supported in Tanzania to participate in land surveys;<br>• 50 women trained on the procedure to obtain land titles (Uganda);<br>• Creation of a land and housing network involving 7 member based organisations in Bangladesh;<br>• Local NGOs supporting individual women to gain land deeds (10 women in Nicaragua and 45 in Cameroon);<br>• Signing of a MoU with the Zambia National Housing Authority to provide 230 households with an occupancy license;<br>• Meetings held with chiefs, land owners and land related agencies to discuss the process of acquiring land for women and to review the Ghanaian Constitution and Lands bill for Northern Ghana. |
| ACM | **Civic engagement**<br>• Workshops on land rights for women organisations and social organisations;<br>• Training of trainers programme on women's access to land.<br>**Lobby and advocacy**<br>• Facilitate participation of civil society events on land reform;<br>• Awareness raising through multi-media campaigns;<br>• Research and monitoring of the application of land and inheritance laws and the quality of justice operators;<br>• Development of proposals to ensure access to and inheritance of land. | • 2,312 women trained in 60 workshops;<br>• 302 staff members of civil society organisations trained;<br>• Women's rights to land campaign (one month each year on 9 to 20 radio stations), 550 institutions collaborating to disseminate information;<br>• 2 national events on land issues;<br>• Operational 'observatorio' (on website). |



### Improved service delivery

In terms of service delivery, the NIZA project has undertaken limited training of people working in the public justice sector and judges (31 in the case of Mozambique). It has informed them on the mechanisms to enhance access to land for women according to statutory and/or customary laws. The project also provided training for paralegals from the community on how to give legal advice and assist women in claiming their rights. These paralegals have been involved in settling land related disputes. The approximately 270 trained paralegals are reported to have reached out to another 2,800 paralegals and an association of paralegals was set up with project support. It is acknowledged that the

74 Outputs were reported in 5 countries where the Huairou Commission project was active on land rights.

paralegals' position in Mozambique's legal system remains unclear and that for the time being they are not officially recognised.

**Civic engagement**

The above three MDG3 Fund projects have also supported local women's organisations to collectively raise women's voice and claim their rights. Whether they supported the organisational development of these organisations is, however, unknown. The relevance of organising and involving women's groups is recognised in recent literature on land rights: it can give a stronger voice to women to attain their rights and can help them to make effective use of the land that they have, e.g. by sharing knowledge on production techniques and collective marketing. The NIZA project has indeed mobilised women to join farmers' associations and has promoted their access to agricultural resources and services.

**Improved lobby and advocacy**

Local and national level lobby and advocacy have had a prominent place in the MDG3 Fund projects. They have focused on improving access to justice, solving land related conflicts and advocating for women getting access to land. Traditional leaders, local government authorities and justice staff were the main target groups. They were informed on women's land rights according to statutory and customary laws and the issues women were facing in this area. Efforts were also made to change their perceptions and attitudes on women's access to land. Community level justice mechanisms were strengthened, amongst others through the training of the paralegals. Women's groups were formed and have assumed a watch-dog function to address land related justice issues. An example is the NIZA project that has helped to set up 14 rural women's associations to raise women's voices.



National advocacy campaigns envisaged land reform legislation and land regularisation processes and, in the case of the Huairou Commission project, also the creation of fair financial mechanisms to acquire land. Advocacy took place through public/community dialogues, awareness creation of (traditional) leaders and mass mobilisation, supported by media campaigns.[75] Since land right issues are very context specific, this investment in research enabled the MDG3 Fund grantees to render their approaches context specific as well.

MDG3 Fund grantees in the sample also have monitored the implementation of land (reform) programmes or land registration programmes and their effect on access of women to land/property. Only few initiatives were taken in terms of direct lobbying of policy makers on the issue agricultural production in general and land rights in particular.

## Outcome realised – enabling environment

**Legal framework**

Project reports do not contain information on whether MDG3 Fund grantees in the sample have effectively influenced property and/or land inheritance legislation, land reform laws

75 Research was done to support these initiatives on e.g. the way land reform programmes were implemented; factors facilitating and hampering access of women to land; strategies that women employed to navigate the formal and customary justice structures and systems.

and/or the design of land reform programmes (linking local advocacy to the national level). Changing existing statutory and customary laws to secure land tenure for women requires long term processes that envisage legislative reform but also changed social and cultural norms and traditions that often hamper access to and control over land for women.

The projects have supported women in seeking justice and claiming their rights at local level. In some cases this has translated into *changed legal practices at local level*, although no examples of such changes were identified in the projects included in the sample.

**Increased awareness on women's right to land**
Project reports indicate that (traditional) local leaders, local judiciary and local government officials have indeed become more aware on women's right to land. For example, the final assessment report on the Huairou Commission projects, describes a positive response from traditional leaders and local authorities in Tanzania, Ghana and Brazil to support women claiming land and property rights. Also at community level small changes are observed. However, there is only anecdotal information available on changes in prevailing social norms and traditions since these norms and traditions were generally not picked up by the projects.

As in the other thematic areas, increased awareness does not in automatically result in changed attitudes and behaviour. Few MDG3 Fund grantees seem to have effectively entered into dialogues with men discussing local norms and traditions that restrict women accessing land although this access is often secured by law. This is demonstrated in the evaluation of the NIZA project where it seemed easier for women groups to claim land compared to individual women doing so (see text box 11).



**Text box 11** *Issues with women claiming land rights in Mozambique*

**The Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NIZA – currently ActionAid) – Women's Land Rights in Southern Africa (WOLAR) project (Mozambique)**

The WOLAR project that was implemented by ActionAid, aimed to increase land titles for women in Southern African countries. A comprehensive strategy was developed, based upon: (1) training of paralegals (men and women) to mediate in land related conflicts, (2) training of trainers, including members of the National Farmers Union, to sensitise and mobilise their member associations, (3) public meetings and mass mobilisation and (4) support to women associations to become legalised in order to apply for communal shared land titles. The approach to supporting women to make land claims was sufficiently broad by not just confining the support to women who were in need of land, but also extending it to property rights violations that were linked to land rights and family law. According to the final narrative report, awareness raising resulted in a significant increase in the number of women acting upon that knowledge and claiming a piece of land. This statement however is not fully substantiated in the external evaluation report of 2012.

To date, no individual land titles have been claimed by individual women. Note however, that in Mozambique community titling is often preferred over individual titling, both among men and women. During the field visit it was found that ten of the fourteen female farmers' associations supported were in the process of obtaining land titles. The other four were situated in districts where local government had suspended receiving shared land title applications from associations.

Although awareness on and knowledge of land titling has increased, it is still problematic to get an individual land title, both for women and men. Several bottlenecks are mentioned such as the lengthy, time consuming application process and the high costs involved.[76] Secondly, competition for Mozambique's natural resources has posed new challenges for the promotion of women's land rights in the last decade. This has been associated with the adoption of policies by the Mozambican government to attract (foreign) investment and promote large-scale land deals. These have sparked concerns about the possible implications for the livelihoods of smallholders. Additionally, large-scale deals have unfortunately often been associated with violations of poor people's rights and marginalisation of women (ActionAid (2012)).



*Total MDG3 grant for the project: EUR 3,039,950*
*Total MDG grant for Mozambique: EUR 665,538 (21%)*

## Outcome realised – female empowerment

**Empowerment at collective level**
From the final assessment reports and interviews it becomes clear that local women and women's organisations have gained information and knowledge on their property rights and on how to claim their rights. That they are using this knowledge is also evident from the data provided by the NIZA and Huairou Commission projects on women (potentially) obtaining access to land in countries like Mozambique (collective land titles for 10 women's associations), Tanzania, Nicaragua, Cameroon and Uganda (see also table 14).[77]

The MDG3 Fund projects also contributed to the formation of women groups and women associations and their claim making capacity. In all three projects, women groups were supported to claim rights for (collective) land, to purchase and cultivate this land. These women groups have also participated in rallies and advocacy meetings. The projects of the

[76] In northern Mozambique, the average costs of applying for a permanent (community) land title were about USD 7,250 (ORAM Nampula (2014)).

[77] According to the evaluation report on the WOLAR project, 'women in Mozambique used their newly acquired knowledge on their rights and on the obligations of policy makers and/or other duty bearers' (Kachita (2012)). According to the same source, the level of knowledge depended on the intensity of the campaigns and the amount of organisations intervening in a particular region on land issues.

Huairou Commission and NIZA combined this support with agricultural support and/or have facilitated access of women (groups) to credit.

It is at the same time evident that women do not always effectively obtain access to land. Several political, economic, social, cultural, and psychological factors come into play and influence the power of individual women to be able to stand up for their rights. The evaluation report on the NIZA project in Mozambique makes clear that it remains very difficult for individual woman to obtain a land title; this was, however, the same for men who wished to obtain an individual title.

## 6.3 Conclusions

Regions and countries differ considerably in terms of statutory and customary land tenure systems, which often exist in parallel and vary in the extent to which they provide women access to land. They also differ in terms of women's position in the family and community, their level of education, as well as in terms of the division of labour between women and men. Good knowledge of this context and of existing barriers faced by women is a prerequisite for making the right choices in 'gender and land rights' interventions. While the MDG3 Fund grantees appear to have sufficient knowledge of these contexts, the projects implemented are a testimony to the complexity of women's land ownership.



The evaluation shows that the MDG3 Fund projects have made a difference by organising women, informing women on their rights, supporting their claim making actions and creating awareness among local decision makers. On the other hand, the interventions insufficiently challenged the social and cultural norms and traditions at individual and community level. Neither was it seen as a priority to change customary and statutory laws in order that they give women the opportunity and the right to access land, when deemed necessary. In the end, mainly as a result of contextual factors, not many individual women have effectively obtained land titles.

The literature on gender and land rights shows moreover that effectively acquiring land titles requires a multi-dimensional and multi-stakeholder approach: it is necessary to work on several fronts and with several actors: providing access to land to women, controlling/reinforcing the implementation of existing laws, training women in production techniques, improving the organisation of women, providing inputs (infrastructure, water, seeds, ...), sensitisation of families, training & sensitisation of government officials, etc. With the exception of the NIZA project, the MDG3 Fund projects have addressed only one or several of the above-mentioned issues but did not pursue such a multi-faceted approach.

7

# Sustainability

## 7.1 Introduction

Sustainability is about assessing whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn (OECD/DAC).[78]

For the assessment of the sustainability of the MDG3 Fund projects, the evaluation looked at the following dimensions:

- institutional sustainability, i.e. whether organisations and systems have enhanced their capacity and performance in relation to their goals;
- financial sustainability, i.e. whether finances are secured to sustain the achieved results; and
- socio-cultural sustainability, i.e. whether the interventions were adapted to the socio-cultural characteristics of the beneficiaries.

Sustainability is assessed at the level of output – which is related to improved services, civic engagement (organisational capacity and networking) and lobby and advocacy capacity – and outcome, which is related to the different dimensions of empowerment and changes in the enabling environment.



## 7.2 Sustainability at output level

The MDG3 Fund as a whole did not have an explicit strategy on the issue of sustainability. Still, all projects have included capacity development activities that aimed to address the institutional and financial sustainability of the grantees themselves and/or of their implementing partners and beneficiary organisations.

Based on the self-assessment of sustainability in the grantees' final assessment reports, the assessment of PwC and evaluation reports, table 15 gives an overall assessment of what was realised in this respect by the seventeen MDG3 Fund projects in the sample. Since little information was available on socio-cultural sustainability this dimension is not included.

**Table 15 Assessment of sustainability of MDG3 Fund projects in the sample (n = 17)**

| | Institutional sustainability | Financial sustainability |
|---|---|---|
| ASMA | - | -- |
| ACM | ++ | +/- |
| AWDF | ++ | + |
| Breakthrough | +/- | +/- |

78 The OECD/DAC definition focuses on environmental and financial aspects of sustainability but other elements contribute to sustainability such as political support, institutional sustainability, cultural appropriateness and adequacy of technology as described in: Chianza (2008).

| | Institutional sustainability | Financial sustainability |
|---|---|---|
| CREA | + | ++ |
| Huairou Commission | ++ | +/- |
| Isis-WICCE | +/- | +/- |
| ITUC | + | + |
| NIZA | +/- | +/- |
| Oxfam GB | +/- | +/- |
| Safaids | +/- | +/- |
| UAF | ++ | +/- |
| V-Day Karama | +/- | +/- |
| WANEP | ++ | +/- |
| WIEGO | + | +/- |
| WLP | + | +/- |

*Legend: very good (++) sustainability is guaranteed at the level of the grantee and at the level of the implementing partners; good (+) sustainability is likely to be achieved; (+/-) mixed results for sustainability, mostly sustainability at the level of implementing partners and/or beneficiary organisations is at risk; (-) sustainability is unlikely to be achieved; (--) it is demonstrated that sustainability is seriously at risk.*



Analysis of the data reflected in this table indicates the following.

**Institutional sustainability**

Institutional sustainability, or the capacity to realise the goals of the organisations concerned, can be assessed as good to very good for ten of the seventeen MDG3 Fund projects of the sample. This can be explained by the fact that the MDG3 Fund has financed the core business of relatively well-established and stronger organisations. Reports and interviews make clear that the grantees continue implementing most of the activities that were financed by the MDG3 Fund. Some grantees even succeeded in integrating their methodologies and campaigns into government programmes and government campaigns. The MDG3 Fund provided the opportunity to experiment, to reach out to new target groups, to collaborate with new organisations and even to start activities in new countries. Some MDG3 Fund grantees (e.g. Huairou Commission and Oxfam GB) have supported their partners in areas like policy development, strategic planning, resource mobilisation, financial management, and in the strengthening of their leadership. In most cases however, capacity development focused on their '*capability to deliver*', i.e. strengthening their technical capacity to execute parts of the project. Furthermore, no monitoring was done on the results of organisational development and institutional strengthening of the organisations.[79]

[79] Organisational development is about the development of the organisation's internal procedures, systems, know-how, etc.; institutional strengthening focuses on strengthening of networking, lobby and advocacy capacities.

Institutional sustainability is mixed for six of the seventeen MDG3 Fund projects and judged to be weak in the case of ASMA. In these six projects institutional sustainability of the MDG3 Fund grantee is guaranteed – but this is not the case at the level of the beneficiary organisations and/or implementing partners. The main issue is that these organisations have not been able to incorporate new themes and new methodologies into their core business. Evaluation reports show in this respect that capacity development support provided by the grantee was often limited in time, and lacked the necessary follow-up or mentoring. Several evaluation reports make clear that this lack of follow-up hampered the transfer of knowledge into the wider organisation and the application thereof.

The data confirm the sustainability challenges identified in e.g. the evaluations of the Breakthrough project and the project of Oxfam GB (Bhatla and Achyut (2011) and Oxfam GB (2012)) such as:

- Lack of a clear vision on future sustainability and comprehensive capacity development strategy resulting in event or supply driven capacity development initiatives.
- Mainstreaming of new approaches and activities was hampered by factors such as internal conflicts within partner organisations, lack of funding, absence of prospects for longer term partnerships and the short duration of projects that made technical and financial follow-up by the grantee difficult.



Networking and alliance building was a prominent feature of most of the MDG3 Fund projects but it is difficult to assess whether these networks and alliances will continue to operate. Looking at the final assessment reports, there are indications that most of the networking primarily served knowledge exchange during meetings and events – rather than the establishment of groups of 'like-minded' institutions that would continue to collaborate in the future. Except for the projects of the Huairou Commission, Oxfam GB and WANEP projects, a vision and mission for the networks/alliances and a strategy for strengthening these was absent.

**Financial sustainability**
Data collected for this evaluation makes clear that financial sustainability at the level of most MDG3 Fund grantees is less of an issue. They have a diversified donor base and in some cases the MDG3 Fund was used to strengthen their resource mobilisation capacities. Although it is not possible to say how much funding was attracted thanks to the MDG3 Fund project, interviewees confirmed that the MDG3 Fund helped in accessing other donor funding.

Financial sustainability is however a major challenge at the level of their implementing partners and beneficiary organisations and especially the smaller civil society and community based organisations. Indications are that this is at risk in eleven projects (i.e. 65% of the sample) and is likely to lead to discontinuation of what was undertaken with MDG3 Fund resources. Only a limited number of the grantees, among them UAF and AWDF, have invested in strengthening capacities of their grantees in resource mobilisation.

## 7.3 Sustainability at outcome level

Several changes at outcome level, related to the different dimensions of women's empowerment were described in the preceding chapters. It depends on factors in the enabling environment whether these changes will sustain.

**Political support and institutional sustainability at system level**
Several projects have contributed to changed legislation to protect women's rights, but it is difficult to assess whether these changes will prevail. Various evaluation reports refer to the fact that nowadays MDG3 Fund grantees – and their partners – have to advocate for protecting equality gains they had fought for over the past decades. Policy in favour of improved gender equality is not evident and under threat in several countries, confirming the importance of the watchdog function of the women's movement.

Implementation of existing legislation is another challenge. Achievements regarding empowerment are hampered by the absence of an adequate legal, social, educational and psychological support infrastructure. This reduces possibilities for women to exert their rights once knowledge and self-confidence were gained and increased social and political participation achieved.



In many MDG3 Fund projects, and this particularly concerns the interventions in the field of GBV, lobby and advocacy activities have focused on policy implementation, monitoring breaches of violations and the (non) response of government institutions. At the same time, they did not invest much in exploring alternative ways to improve state responsiveness or, in collaboration with government institutions, to look for appropriate solutions. Evaluation reports[80] describe the urgency of adequate state responsiveness in terms of legislation, adequate institutions, and services to combat violations of women's rights and underline that more work needs to be done at this level.

**Cultural appropriateness and socio-cultural sustainability**
As mentioned above, little information is available on the socio-cultural sustainability of the MDG3 Fund projects. The evaluation shows that about a third of the projects studied in-depth have aimed to address the root causes of discrimination of women by entering in individual and community dialogues to change social norms and cultural practices.[81] Most projects have furthermore focussed on creating awareness on issues like GBV or women's political and economic rights and have put MDG3 on the public and political agenda.

Still, in almost all projects, socio-cultural sustainability of the 'changed discourse' and 'changed attitudes' is at risk, though possibly less so for those projects that involved 'professionals' such as teachers, public officers, lawyers, journalists, religious leaders, rather than only community volunteers. Discussing social and cultural norms that form the basis of discrimination of women has become embedded within the work of these

80 See for example Oxfam GB (2012); Bhatla & Achyut (2011); and CREA (undated).
81 Breakthrough, CREA, NIZA, Oxfam GB, SafAIDS.

professionals and helps to continue the dialogues addressing root causes of gender inequality and its many manifestations.

Issues identified in this respect are furthermore the following. First of all, as analysed above, there is a difference between recognising or saying that certain social norms and cultural practices are unacceptable and effectively changing attitudes and taking action. As experience in the Netherlands has shown, this takes a much longer period of time than the three year project timeframe that the MDG3 Fund – like many other international programmes – has offered. Moreover, especially when new approaches were introduced with new organisations, even more limited time was available to work with the final beneficiaries. Secondly, changing the root causes of discrimination of women does not go without opposition – and not only from men. In many countries, well organised, well financed, often conservative and faith-based organisations and institutions provide an important countervailing power.

## 7.4 Conclusions

The evaluation shows that the institutional and financial sustainability of the MDG3 Fund grantees is guaranteed, an exception being ASMA. They are, as intended, larger, better developed civil society organisations, that have access to different sources of external funding. The situation is different at the level of their implementing partners and beneficiary institutions. Often, the low level of institutional and financial sustainability of these organisations jeopardises the sustainability of project results. There is also doubt about the continued functioning of the networks that were established.



While the MDG3 Fund as a whole did not have a clear strategy on sustainability, most grantees have taken up some form of capacity development of their partners. In in many cases, however, as they were considered instrumental for achieving the project results, this focused on their technical capacity to deliver. Broader development support covering topics such as policy development, strategic planning, resource mobilisation, financial management, and the strengthening of leadership was limited. Capacity development was moreover affected by a lack of clear vision and strategy. The short duration of the projects also made it difficult to provide the much-needed longer-term support of the implementing partners to integrate new approaches to address women's rights issues.

Combined with difficulties in accessing finances, it is very unlikely that the majority of the CSOs involved in the MDG3 Fund projects will continue implementing the project interventions.

# 8

# Efficiency

## 8.1 Introduction

Analysing the level of efficiency of the MDG3 Fund was difficult. The main reasons were that financial data of the MDG3 Fund grantees could not be compared as there was no single financial reporting format to account for the MDG3 Fund. Moreover, no result based financial reporting was required. The assessment of efficiency therefore focuses on the following issues: (i) the share of the MDG3 Fund to the overall project budget of the grantees; (ii) the coherence between inputs, outputs and ambitions and (iii) the quality of the M&E of the MDG3 Fund projects. The management of the MDG3 Fund as a whole and the outsourcing modality were assessed as well.

## 8.2 Share of the MDG3 Fund to the overall project budget

All grantees had access to a variety of donors. This confirms the choice made to support well-established and stronger organisations. The MDG3 Fund represented between 12% and 60% of their budget, with an average of 31%. This shows that the Fund has made a sizeable contribution that has enabled the grantees to broaden and/or diversify their scope, either thematically, geographically or in terms of outreach and target groups.



No project co-financing was required from the grantees and the share of the MDG3 Fund grant of total project costs ranged between 20% and 100%. This is also clear from table 16 concerning the 17 projects included in the sample, which combines this data with information on what kind of programmes were support.

**Table 16** Share of the MDG3 Fund to the overall project budget and type of supported project (n = 17)

| % MDG3 Fund | Projects | Existing multi-country campaign | Existing programme or intervention strategies | New specific projects |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 100% | AWDF | | | |
| | CREA | | | |
| | Huairou Commission | | | |
| | SafAIDS | | | |
| | WANEP | | | |
| | WIEGO | | | |
| 80-99% | ASMA | | | |
| | Isis-WICCE | | | |
| | ITUC | | | |
| | NIZA | | | |
| | ACM | | | |

| % MDG3 Fund | Projects | Existing multi country campaign | Existing programme or intervention strategies | New specific projects |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 40-79% | Breakthrough | | | |
| | Gender Links | | | |
| | V-Day Karama | | | |
| 20-39% | Oxfam GB | | | |
| | UAF | | | |
| | WLP | | | |

Allowing a grant equal to 100% of project costs enabled the organisations to propose interventions that were difficult to get financed by other donors, such as lobby and advocacy interventions and international networking.

## 8.3 Coherence between inputs, outputs and ambitions



The evaluation shows that efficiency is very much influenced by a good design of the intervention logic, a good balance between input, realised output and outreach, a balanced budget, plus effective and efficient cooperation with implementing partners and other stakeholders. These factors have contributed to efficiency of seven MDG3 projects and had a negative influence on efficiency for the other ten of the sample (see table 17).[82] Project efficiency was furthermore influenced by the share of overhead compared to the total project budget, the efficiency of the re-granting approaches and the realisation degree. The following paragraphs elaborate on these aspects.

**Overhead**

Using the grantees' own financial reports, the overheads costs of the projects were calculated for the parts that were funded by the MDG3 Fund. In doing so, management, administration and coordination costs, including salaries and travel costs, costs related to evaluations, audits and financial management were taken into account. Salaries of programme implementation staff and costs related to programme interventions (including travel) were perceived as programme costs and were excluded. Results of the analysis (see table 17) make clear that the overhead is variable, up to 20% for six projects, between 21% and 30% for ten projects and over 40% in the case of ASMA. These percentages do not include overhead costs at the level of implementing partners and beneficiary organisations.

Nine of the eleven grantees with a high share of overhead managed projects that covered a large number of countries and were implemented by a large number of implementing

[82] During the appraisal process the quality of the organisation's financial and administrative capacities was assessed. Three scores were possible: adequate; good or very good. For two of the seventeen MDG3 Fund projects they were assessed as adequate in the other cases as good.

partners and/or beneficiary civil society organisations. While the MDG3 Fund enabled this kind of expansion of their activities, insufficient attention was given to develop management mechanisms and procedures capable of monitoring these multi-country and multi-beneficiary programmes. Several grantees have implemented centralised approaches demanding a lot of investment (and travelling) from head office. In some project outreach was limited and not justifying the higher overhead costs.

**Table 17 Summary of efficiency aspects of MDG3 Fund projects (n = 17)**

| | Efficiency assessment | | Overhead | | | Re-granting procedures | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Efficient | Less efficient | 12-20% | 21-20% | >40% | Call for proposals, tender | Individual invitation to participate | Seed fund after participation in training | No re-granting * | Number of implementing organisations | % of MDG3 Fund budget re-granted | Average grant amount (in EUR) |
| ACM | ■ | | ■ | | | | | | ■ | | | |
| ASMA | | ■ | | | ■ | | | | ■ | | | |
| AWDF | ■ | | ■ | | | ■ | | | | 232 | 59 | 8,300 |
| Breakthrough | ■ | | | ■ | | | ■ | | | | | |
| CREA | | ■ | | ■ | | | ■ | | | | | |
| Gender Links | | ■ | | ■ | | | | | ■ | | | |
| Huairou Commission | ■ | | ■ | | | ■ | | | | 42 | 36 | 11,900 |
| Isis-WICCE | ■ | | ■ | | | | | ■ | | | | |
| ITUC | | ■ | | ■ | | | ■ | | | 14 | 24 | 85,000 |
| NIZA | | ■ | | ■ | | | | | ■ | | | |
| Oxfam GB | ■ | | ■ | | | | ■ | | | n/a | 50 | 25,000 |
| Safaids | | ■ | | ■ | | | ■ | | | 21 | 15 | n/a |
| UAF | ■ | | | ■ | | ■ | | | | 157 | 49 | 5,000 |
| V-Day Karama | | ■ | | ■ | | | ■ | | | 12 | 26 | 28,000 |

| | Efficiency assessment | | Overhead | | | Re-granting procedures | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Efficient | Less efficient | 12-20% | 21-20% | >40% | Call for proposals, tender | Individual invitation to participate | Seed fund after participation in training | No re-granting * | Number of implementing organisations | % of MDG3 Fund budget re-granted | Average grant amount (in EUR) |
| WANEP | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WIEGO | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WLP | | | | | | | | | | n/a | 35 | 30,000 |
| **Total** | **7** | **10** | **6** | **10** | **1** | **3** | **7** | **2** | **5** | | | |



* *Partners identified before project execution.*

## Re-granting

Three different types of re-granting procedures were identified among the projects that were assessed, as shown in table 17. They were used by 'traditional' re-granting organisations such as AWDF, but also by other organisations.

Only part of the project budgets was re-granted. This varied from 25% to close to 60% of the total grant, with the largest share of re-granted budget for the grantees operating through calls for proposals. Table 17 shows in this respect that UAF, AWDF (both women funds) and the Huairou Commission provided comparatively lower grants to larger numbers of civil society and community based organisations. The other MDG3 Fund projects provided larger grants that served to implement parts of the centrally developed MDG3 project. In this case, the number of sub-grantees was limited and the size of the sub-grant larger. There is no information on whether these sub-grantees had access to other donors or to what extent the MDG3 Fund was leveraging access to such donors.

Twelve organisations from the sample applied some sort of re-granting strategy, whereas five organisations did not. An analysis of the efficiency of their re-granting shows that:

- The re-granting procedures of UAF and AWDF and of the Huairou Commission gave a large number of community based (women's) organisations access to funding to implement their own projects. Apart from providing grants, these organisations also invested in capacity development and networking of their grantees, though this was limited for UAF and AWDF and more prominent for the Huairou Commission.

Efficiency of these three projects is good (design, input/output ratio, balanced budget, etc.) with an overhead of 20-22%.

- Seven grantees identified implementing partners and invited them to execute parts of the projects' intervention strategies. The number of partners was smaller in this case. Another two grantees have provided seed money to allow organisations that had participated in training to implement action plans. The efficiency of these re-granting approaches is mixed (three good, six weak). Weak efficiency is explained by the factors described above, in combination with a relatively high overhead (>21%) and, in some cases, with limited outreach (e.g. V-Day Karama and WLP Egypt).
- Finally, five grantees have implemented the project directly from their head offices and/or local offices without any re-granting. Implementing partners – if any – were already identified before the start of the. Efficiency is assessed to be weak for four of them (the exception being ACM, which worked in one country). This is mainly explained by the fact that these organisations had underestimated the demands of managing, supporting and monitoring a variety of implementing partners in a large number of countries. For three grantees (NIZA, WIEGO and ASMA) efficiency was further negatively influenced by a high overhead.

**Realisation degree**

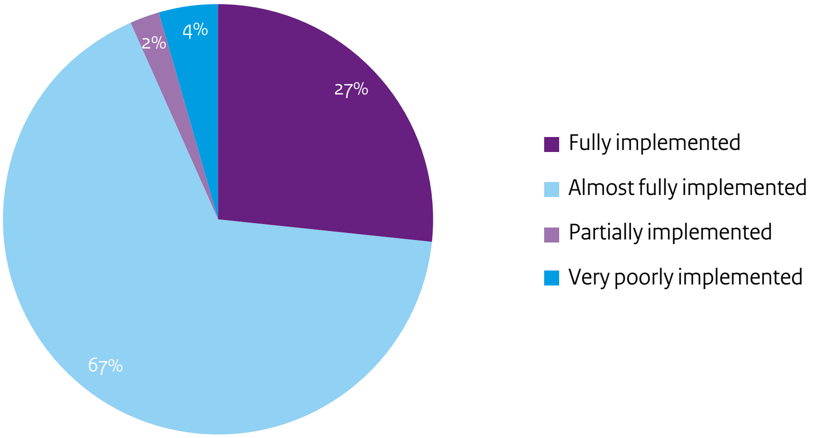
The projects' realisation degree was assessed using the information provided in the grantees' final reports. These indicate that a large majority of the 45 projects were implemented as planned in terms of activities carried out (see figure 10). Deviations from the initial plans were usually small and well accounted for.[83] The state of affairs is similar for the sample of 17 projects; only in case of the ASMA project were activities not implemented according to plan and were envisaged results only partially realised.[84]



83 An exception is the Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML) project; in this case, significant changes were made in activities, without sufficiently informing the project administrator in advance. The modified activity plan was however more cost-efficient and almost all expected outputs could be achieved.

84 Within the total population of MDG3 Fund projects, Akina Mama West Africa (not included in the sample) was the other case.

**Figure 10** *Realisation degree of the MDG3 Fund projects (N = 45)*






## 8.4 Monitoring and evaluation by the grantees

The M&E capacity of the applicants was one of the assessment criteria in the organisational capacity assessment that was done during project appraisal. Applicants also got more points when a budget line for evaluation – which was not obligatory – was included in their proposal. It was possible for applicants to score well on overall organisational capacity while their M&E capacity was limited. Interviews with members of the appraisal committee indicate moreover that it was not intended to impose a strict M&E framework on the grantees. It is worth recalling furthermore that the Ministry opted for a monitoring 'light' approach, aligning MDG3 Fund monitoring to the existing monitoring systems of the grantee.

Among the seventeen grantees in the sample, only Breakthrough, NIZA, Oxfam GB and Safaids seem to have well-developed M&E systems, with a clear description of roles and responsibilities for each of the implementing partners. They are capable of collecting relevant data at output and outcome level in a systematic manner and of conducting regular to good quality evaluations.

The M&E practice of the other thirteen grantees was found to be weak to very weak. The evaluation shows that monitoring was mostly done at activity level; little information is available on output and outcome level. Weak design of the intervention logic, absence of SMART indicators, lack of clear targets, absence of a strategy for data collection are some of the explicative factors. Little investments were also made in the M&E capacity of the implementing partners.

Although the MDG3 Fund guidelines, requirements and reporting formats did not challenge the grantees to improve their M&E practice, several of them have confirmed that the MDG3 Fund has triggered them to do so and that part of the overhead budgets was used for developing better M&E systems and data-collection tools (see e.g. Achtell (2012)).

## 8.5 Management of the MDG3 Fund

The ministry of Foreign Affairs has outsourced the management (including the initial assessment of the proposals, financial management, monitoring and reporting) to the consortium PwC (an accountancy firm) and Femconsult (a Dutch consultancy firm providing technical advice on gender related issues). A contract between the ministry and PwC stipulated the duties and responsibilities for Fund management, which were strictly followed by PwC and Femconsult. Jointly, the consortium received a fee of EUR 4.03 million to manage the Fund.

Between 2008 and 2011, a small group of staff PwC and Femconsult managed the Fund on a daily basis. For the assessment of the project proposals, progress reports and final reports, additional consultants/experts were contracted in view of the high workload. The quality of their work was monitored by PwC and Femconsult.



The appraisal process of the project proposals has been judged as fair and transparent by stakeholders interviewed as mentioned in chapter 2. Quality assurance of the project appraisals drafted under the responsibility of PwC and Femconsult was ensured by the appraisal committee that was installed at the ministry of Foreign Affairs. Interviews with the people involved in this committee showed that a number of initial appraisals were judged to be of insufficient quality and had to be re-written. The quality of the assessment of the progress reports and final reports was good.

Grantees interviewed showed appreciation of the way PwC and Femconsult have managed the Fund. In particular the financial-administrative management requirements have contributed to improving their financial management capacities. Several interviewees only regretted that they had no contact with staff from the ministry of Foreign Affairs. They also highlighted that not a real partnership was established with PwC and Femconsult which went beyond the financial and technical management and accountability requirements. The only bottleneck mentioned by PwC was the fact that it was not authorised to take decisions on the requests for payments, which caused delays in disbursement of the Funds.
Instead of using a result based management system, PwC and Femconsult's focus was on the management of inputs and activities. Budgets were to be linked to activities and changes in planned activities had to be approved by PwC and Femconsult. As mentioned above, reporting by the grantees focused on these activities and although they were asked to provide also information on outputs and outcomes, the observed lack of reporting on these aspects did not have financial implications.

According to the contract between PwC and the ministry, monitoring missions were to be foreseen and one-third of the grantees was to be visited. Monitoring missions, in which a group of staff members of PwC and Femconsult participated (the ministry did not participate systematically), were organised to the USA, Guatemala, Uganda, Kenya, India, Ghana and Egypt. According to PwC and Femconsult these missions covered more than one-third of the projects. Countries were selected based upon the presence of multiple grantees, covering several priority themes of the Fund. In 2009 the missions mainly aimed to support the grantees in improving the set-up of their projects. From 2010 onwards they aimed to strengthen the M&E capacity of the grantee, solve financial and administrative issues and contribute to a critical reflection on progress on results. These visits were appreciated by the grantees interviewed, even though the time spent per grantee was at times insufficient to gain a real understanding of progress and possible bottlenecks in implementation.

There was regular formal and informal communication between the ministry and PwC and Femconsult. The ministry was informed on a yearly basis on the progress of the Fund through the annual management reports prepared by PwC. These annual reports focused on financial accountability; evidently, information on project output and outcome could only be provided to a limited extent. This hampered building social and political capital within the ministry regarding the fight for women's rights and gender equality, which was regretted by the grantees interviewed.



## 8.6 Conclusions

Efficiency was found to be weak for ten of the seventeen MDG3 Fund projects assessed. This is mainly influenced by 'traditional' factors such as lack of good design, poor balance between input, output and outreach, not well balanced budget and lack of cooperation with other stakeholders. Efficiency is further hampered by a relatively high overhead for most of the projects. High overheads are explained by a preference for multi-country programmes – as promoted in the Fund's conception – that were centrally conceived and managed coupled with insufficient attention for developing the necessary management mechanisms that such programmes require.

Re-granting has not influenced the level of project efficiency; weak project management and implementation can be noticed among both re-granters and non- re-granters. However, the re-granting approach was only efficient for those grantees that already possessed a proper system to manage such grants and women funds. Organisations working through calls for proposals appeared to be more efficient and reached out to many community based (women's) organisations.

M&E is one of the weaker features of the MDG3 Fund. The choice for a 'monitoring light' set up was based upon the assumption that grantees would be able to deliver reliable data at output and outcome level. In practice only data at activity – and to a limited extent – at output level were provided. Multi-country programmes demand sound M&E systems, which

were usually lacking and only aggregate data were provided that failed to give insight in results achieved at national, regional and international level and the linkages between them.

Outsourcing the management of the Fund was efficient, taking into account the fact that PwC and Femconsult could more easily hire a substantial number of experts when needed and the fact that there was no capacity at the ministry to manage such a Fund. Management of the Fund was properly done within the boundaries of the contract. Further, management was evidently focused on the necessary financial and administrative follow-up of the projects and less attention was paid to outputs and outcomes. Outsourcing has at the same time hampered building social and political capital within the ministry in the area of women's rights and gender equality.

9

# Answering the evaluation questions

This chapter recapitulates the main findings from the evaluation of the MDG3 Fund. It does so on the basis of the evaluation questions that were formulated in the Terms of Reference and relate to the main OECD/DAC criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. It uses the analytical frameworks which were introduced in chapter 1 for women's empowerment and policy influencing, lobby and advocacy.

In presenting these findings, it is important to keep in mind that the ministry of Foreign Affairs decided in 2008 that a 'monitoring light' approach was to be used for the MDG3 Fund and to rely on the grantees' own M&E systems. The grantees' systems proved to be of variable quality and were often limited to monitoring at activity and output level. Only in a few cases were reliable evaluation reports available. This evaluation was not capable of filling the resulting information caveat. As a consequence, only anecdotal information is available on outcomes and their contribution to women's empowerment.

### 1. *What are the key characteristics of the MDG3 Fund portfolio?*

The MDG3 Fund was introduced in 2008 against a background of declining funding for women's organisations in developing countries and slow progress in realizing the MDG3. Its overall objective was to achieve '*improvements of rights and opportunities for women and girls in developing countries*' by funding projects that would contribute to concrete improvements in rights and opportunities for women and girls in Africa, Latin America and Asia. The Fund focused on four priority themes, i.e. securing property and inheritance rights for women, promoting employment and equal employment opportunities for women, increasing women's participation in politics and public administration and stopping violence against women. The MDG3 Fund lacked a clear overall programme strategy (currently referred to as 'theory of change') of what milestones would be needed to realise its overall objective. 

The final budget of the MDG3 Fund was EUR 77 million, of which EUR 76.9 million was spent in the end. These funds have served 45 projects that were approved after a comprehensive selection process. The project portfolio reflects the ministry's choices made 2008, in terms of a preference for multi-country projects covering countries from the OECD/DAC list of ODA eligible countries, a focus on the above four priority themes, working with well-established beneficiary organisations, preferably from the South, and including organisations with an ability to reach small civil society and community based (women's) organisations.

The selected projects:

- were implemented in more than 100 countries from the OECD/DAC list, with over half of them undertaken in Sub-Saharan Africa. Activities were undertaken in former and current Dutch partner countries as well as fragile states.
- involved larger, well-established organisations like women funds – which channelled grants to smaller civil society and community-based organisations – international networks and international NGOs. Over two-thirds of grantees were from Southern countries.

- covered all thematic priorities, although there was a strong focus on GBV (34 projects) and political participation (24 projects). The themes of property and land rights and women's employment were less frequently addressed, i.e. by 11 and 10 projects respectively. Many projects covered multiple themes but were at the same time one-dimensional in the sense that they did not sufficiently address the different dimensions of empowerment or linked economic, social and political rights of women.

## Effectiveness

2. *What were the main/common problems that were addressed by the projects in the MDG3 Fund's four priority areas?*

The main issues addressed by the MDG3 Fund projects have included the following for each of the Fund's four priority themes:



| | |
|---|---|
| **Gender Based Violence** | • The high incidence of GBV.<br>• Limited capacity of (women's) organisations to provide adequate services to GBV survivors – e.g. in terms of conflict mediation and counselling skills, supporting women to claim their rights or putting GBV related claims at local courts, or in terms of providing shelter and support services for GBV survivors.<br>• Limited knowledge among women and women's groups of GBV related legislation, the working of the legal system.<br>• Limited knowledge of women's rights among representatives of the legal system of GBV related legislation, women's rights. |
| **Political participation** | • Few women leaders in politics at both national and local levels.<br>• Public opinion that is often sceptical about women's presence and role in politics.<br>• Limited skills among potential women leaders.<br>• Little support for women once elected in governance bodies. |
| **Employment** | • Labour legislation insufficiently addresses women's employment rights.<br>• Little gender sensitivity in organisations representing women workers in both the formal and informal sectors.<br>• Women have little access to information on wages, labour laws, etc.<br>• Weak networking of (labour) organisations (also) representing women. |
| **Property rights** | • Weak property rights in general and land rights in particular for women.<br>• Little awareness and knowledge among women and government institutions of women's property and land rights (statutory and customary).<br>• Limited support facilities available for women to claim their rights. |

### 3. *What were the strategies behind these interventions financed and were they relevant for addressing these problems?*

In terms of strategies pursued, about 80% of the grantees have implemented a range of policy influencing, lobby and advocacy activities. This was done by the grantees themselves, their implementing partners and/or the beneficiary organisations and has also involved the final beneficiaries. Grantees have used the MDG3 Fund to invest in strengthening the lobby and advocacy and civic engagement capacities of these partners. They have done so by introducing new strategies, approaches and tools and/or by facilitating linking and learning and information dissemination. Using Jones' (2011) typology of approaches, projects have undertaken the following in relation to policy influencing activities:

- *Advice* – Advice was given to governments on topics such as GBV-related legislation. Research findings were disseminated on e.g. the situation of women's access to land rights, strategies women may use to navigate formal and informal legal structures and systems, the non-application of national and international frameworks concerning GBV and the consequences thereof and on the ILO convention for domestic workers and minimum wage setting.
- *Advocacy* – Advocacy primarily entailed the organisation of different types of (public) awareness raising campaigns and the organisation of (international) meetings and conferences to develop joint lobby and advocacy strategies and to strengthen lobby and advocacy oriented networking. Awareness raising has *inter alia* dealt with e.g. changing social norms, harmful practices and the manifestation of gender based violence, women's labour rights, perceptions and attitudes regarding women's access to land, promoting women as political actors and the use of voluntary quotas on women's representation in mainly local decision-making bodies. Advocacy activities have targeted the general public (using a variety of mass media), specific target groups, including men, traditional leaders, and professionals such as teachers, judges and public prosecutors and health workers and a broad range of government institutions.
- *Lobbying* – Lobby activities related amongst others to the ratification of ILO conventions and the need for improved government responsiveness to effectively deal with GBV survivors. They also included dialogues with (local) government officials and politicians on women's land rights and the involvement of women in local governance structures, and lobbying for women's quota in parliament.
- While also different forms of *activism* were used in some of the projects, especially in the area of GBV, information on this aspect is not consistently provided.

Besides the policy influencing activities, most projects have also undertaken a range of capacity building activities, such as:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Gender Based Violence** | • Training of volunteers and professionals to provide counselling and conflict mediation.<br>• Training of health workers to address physical and mental health problems of GBV survivors related to armed conflict.<br>• Training lawyers and juridical staff on GBV. |
| **Political participation** | • Training of NGO staff on political participation and leadership.<br>• Training of women leaders on district consultative council processes. |
| **Employment** | • Training of fair trade producers and fair trade organisations.<br>• Training of informal workers on labour laws, occupational health issues, and social security schemes for the informal sector. |
| **Property rights** | • Training of judges and paralegals on statutory and customary land rights.<br>• Training to improve agricultural productivity.<br>• Training of NGO staff to support women in getting land rights. |



4. *What were the intended immediate and/or final target groups of the projects and what are their main characteristics? What was their role in project design and implementation (participants, beneficiaries, ...)?*

The intended final beneficiaries of the Fund were loosely defined in terms of 'marginalised women and girls'; allowing for the MDG3 Fund grantees to give body to these terms in their proposals. Data from the projects makes clear that in practice 'marginalised women and girls' included sex workers, women with HIV/aids, disabled women, lesbian and transgender women, girl child soldiers, trafficked young women, adolescent mothers, single mothers, victims of sexual violence, domestic workers as well as women belonging to marginalised populations (religious or ethnic minorities, refugees, as well as indigenous women).

Regarding the involvement of immediate beneficiaries in the project design and implementation, the evaluation found that this was the case for those projects that re-granted part of the MDG3 Fund budget to smaller women's organisations through a call for proposals: local (women's) organisations designed and implemented the activities for which they requested funding from the MDG3 Fund grantee.

5. *Were the activities that were foreseen implemented as planned? Were the intended target groups effectively reached? If so, how, if not what were the reasons?*

The level of implementation depended per project. However, the evaluation found that over 90% of the projects were (almost) fully implemented in the time and with the resources available and that deviations from the initial plan were small.

Regarding the target groups, as mentioned above, these were often very broadly defined. At times, target groups were reached through a long intervention chain: projects were implemented by the grantees themselves and/or by several implementing partners that, in turn, could involve local non-governmental or community-based organisations (the immediate beneficiaries) to reach the final beneficiaries: local women. The intervention chain was shorter when grantees worked directly with final beneficiaries, i.e. either individual local women or local women's organisations.

Furthermore, the meaning of 'target groups reached' differed for every MDG3 Fund project. In could either mean the number of women that had received medical surgery, but also the number of women that had been exposed to an anti-GBV media campaign or that had joined trade unions. Unfortunately, the available data does not allow determining with any certainty the number and exact type of organisations reached or the final beneficiaries that have benefited from the MDG3 Fund. 

6. *What were the main external factors affecting/facilitating these realisations? Has there been any coordination with similar interventions and organisations at country level?*

Across the board, the following factors have influenced project realisation. First of all, persistently high illiteracy rates among grassroots women have been a key factor in all thematic areas covered by the MDG3 Fund. Only some projects have made an effort to address this fundamental issue. Secondly, with few exceptions, projects were implemented within a context of considerable gender inequality and dominating traditional values and norms which maintain and reinforce this inequality. While some projects have challenged these norms and values, their lifetime was too short to realise lasting changes; this has also affected the extent to which awareness of e.g. GBV was converted into concrete changes in behaviour among women – and men.

Regarding collaboration and coordination, the evaluation found that although in a large number of countries more than one MDG3 Fund grantee was active, collaboration among them was limited or non-existent. There was also little trace of collaboration with organisations that were supported through bilateral projects of the Netherlands' embassies in those countries.

## Outcome

7. *To what extent have the targeted organisations and women been able to effectively use the resources (knowledge, skills, advocacy, ...) made available from the MDG3 Fund?*

Beneficiaries have been able to effectively use the resources that were made available from the MDG3 Fund in most cases. This is also evident from the benefits that have been obtained.

8. *What benefits has this brought to them at individual and/or household level and/or organisational level?*

Using the different dimensions of the concept of empowerment, evaluation findings are as follows.

- *The power to* – which concerns aspects of stronger economic power and enhanced practical knowledge and/or skills and the ability to convert them into concrete action or means. The evaluation gives ample evidence that projects have indeed contributed to enhanced knowledge and skills among women. This included knowledge on (women's) rights in relation to the Fund's priority themes, knowing how to claim these rights and what to do when these rights are violated. At the same time, no concrete indications were found of stronger economic power.
- *The power within* – which relates to aspects such as self-confidence and self-image and the ability to make choices concerning one's future. The evaluation in this respect shows that women have indicated that they feel more confident, both at the individual level and the collective level, to speak out against GBV, to take up leadership positions in local governance structures or to get involved in negotiations for minimum wages, better working conditions or social protection schemes. The evaluation makes clear at the same time that moving from increased knowledge and self-confidence to actually standing up for women's rights – for example in an area like GBV – is not easy. Several issues have come up in this respect: (i) many projects did not address the underlying norms and practices that are the root causes of GBV, limited participation of women in politics or determining that women cannot realise their legal claims to land rights; (ii) in case they did address them, there was considerable (male) opposition with men often remaining beyond the scope of the interventions; and (iii) changes in customs, traditions and norms take much longer than would be possible within the three year timeframe of the projects.
- *The power with* – which concerns social and political power, the ability to take decisions or to influence decision makers and to bear responsibility and to be free in using resources available. For this dimension of empowerment the evaluation findings are as follows. The main changes observed in this respect relate to the fact that women established or joined women's groups or farmers associations to strengthen their position to address the problem of GBV, to increase their claim making capacity in relation to e.g. land rights, and to increase their access to productive resources and services. These groups and associations have also played a watchdog function in relation to (potential) infringements of women's rights.

9. *Have there been measurable changes in terms of women's independence and control over resources and can these be attributed or contributed to the MDG3 Fund supported interventions?*

The evaluation does not allow expressing a judgment on possible changes in terms of women's independence, increased control over resources and respect for women's rights or the contribution made to advancing gender equality. Consequently, the extent to which the projects have contributed to sustainable improvements for women remains yet to be seen.

The evaluation nevertheless points at the following issues:

- Projects reported to have contributed to increased knowledge and to, albeit sometimes limited, changed attitudes and to the establishment of interest groups. It is however unclear what these outputs have meant for actual changes in behaviour (outcome) or, ultimately, for increased gender equality (impact). First of all, changes in this respect take much longer than the Fund's lifetime. Secondly, the existing M&E of projects and Fund do not contain this type of information as mentioned above.
- The issue of government responsiveness, in particular in relation to GBV and to women's claims with respect to their rights. Most projects have focused on strengthening the capacity of local organisations in monitoring the role of government in providing services to GBV survivors – but little was done to (i) assess the reasons for poor service delivery or (ii) to identify possibilities of how civil society can support government in stepping up its performance and can look for joint solutions.



10. *Did the interventions contribute to advancing gender equality at (a) the level of the individual (economic-, social-, political equality, bodily integrity); and/or (b) the collective level and/or the enabling environment (laws, services)?*

For the reasons mentioned under question 9, this could not be measured and is therefore unknown.

11. *How relevant was the strategy of organisation/networking, capacity development, lobbying and advocacy for the empowerment of women concerned and the attainment of gender equality?*

The MDG3 Fund contributed to strengthening networking and coalition building (in perspective of linking and learning, knowledge development and joint action), linking local to global advocacy and vice versa. This has happened in particular in relation to GBV and women's employment. However, with few exceptions, projects lacked a clear strategy for this purpose. Issues have been identified in terms of e.g. network leadership, internal governance and decision making, little sensitivity to the environment in which the networks operate, a focus on accountability to donors rather than members and questionable sustainability prospects.

## Efficiency

12. *At the level of the individual organisations, what were the resources available from the MDG3 Fund and to what extent were these mixed with and/or replaced other funding?*

MDG3 Fund projects served to implement specific activities of the grantees and/or were used as a contribution to their overall institutional budget. The MDG3 Fund did not require project co-financing from the grantees, although some indeed have contributed from their own resources and funding they had obtained from other donors. The contribution from the MDG3 Fund has allowed the grantees to expand their geographical scope, increase the number of beneficiaries, diversify the types of activities undertaken and/or to introduce new methodologies and approaches.

More than 50% of all MDG3 Fund grantees have re-granted or transferred parts of the grant to implementing partners or beneficiary organisations. This has resulted in a large number of smaller organisations getting access to certain amounts of funds. The management of the re-granting process was only efficient for those projects where grantees already had (ample) experience with the re-granting approach and had a proper system to manage grants, combined with investments in capacity development of their sub-grantees.



13. *What inputs were financed by the projects and how efficient have the beneficiary organisations been in making use of those resources?*

The variety of activities implemented by the grantees and their partners has come with a broad range of inputs, with the specifics differing between projects, including:

- Economic inputs: including small grants for women's activists and women's organisations; financial assistance for GBV survivors;
- Human inputs: education and training, support, coaching, mentoring, exchange visits, etc.;
- Socio-political inputs: funding for conferences, research, multi-media campaigns, networking and capacity building, support to platforms, forums, networks, lobby and advocacy.

As explained above, over 90% of the projects were (almost) fully implemented in the time and with the resources available. Still, efficiency was found to be weak for ten projects out of the seventeen from the sample. Main reasons were weak project design, poor balance between input, output and outreach, an ill-balanced budget and a lack of cooperation with other stakeholders. Efficiency was further influenced negatively by a relatively high overhead for most of the MDG3 Fund projects. In the sample of seventeen projects, ten projects had an overhead rate between 21% and 30% and in one case (ASMA) this exceeded 40%. This high overhead rate is explained by the fact that many projects covered multiple countries that were managed and coordinated centrally. The implications, including financial ones, of such a set-up were underestimated by many grantees.

*14. How were the projects managed and has there been any voice of the final beneficiary organisations and women?*

In terms of management, the evaluation focused on the management of the MDG3 Fund as a whole. To a lesser extent was attention paid to the management of the individual projects.

In terms of management of the MDG3 Fund as whole, evaluation findings are as follows. The decision taken in 2008 to outsource Fund management to the consortium of PwC and Femconsult is understandable, bearing in mind that there was no capacity in the ministry of Foreign Affairs to assume this task. In addition, the ministry had little trust in existing funds channelling finances to women's organisations (including those managed by UNIFEM) at the time of the design of the MDG3 Fund. The appraisal process of the project proposals has been judged as fair and transparent by stakeholders. Quality assurance of the project appraisals drafted under the responsibility of PwC and Femconsult was ensured by the appraisal committee that was installed at the ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Management of the Fund was properly done within the boundaries of the contract by PwC and Femconsult, assisted by additional experts when needed. Jointly, they received a fee of EUR 4.03 million to manage the Fund. The only bottleneck mentioned by PwC was the fact that PwC was not authorised to take decision on the requests for payments, which caused delays in disbursement of the Funds. Further, management was evidently focused on the necessary financial and administrative follow-up of the projects and less attention was paid to outputs and outcomes. This, combined with the 'monitoring light' approach for the Fund, hampered building social and political capital within the ministry in the area of women's rights and gender equality.



Regarding the management of the projects, M&E was found to be weak for most of the projects. The choice for a 'monitoring light' approach was based upon the wrong assumption that grantees would be able to deliver reliable data at output and outcome level. However, the multi-country programmes lacked the necessary M&E systems and only aggregated data were provided that have limited insight into accomplishments. Unfortunately, the evaluation was not able to assess the extent to which final beneficiaries have been involved in the management of the individual projects.

## Sustainability

When talking about sustainability, it is important to distinguish between the sustainability of the grantees, which were often bigger, better developed and well established development NGOs, and their implementing partner/beneficiary organisations. The latter group mainly consisted of small(er) local NGOs and CBOs that were involved in the MDG3 Fund projects through re-granting applied by the grantees. In addition, the evaluation distinguishes between institutional sustainability, i.e. whether organisations and systems have enhanced their capacity and performance in relation to their goals, and financial

sustainability, or the degree to which organisations have secured finances to sustain the achieved results.

*15. What is the institutional and financial capacity and the commitment of grantees and implementing partner organisations to continue the activities financed under the MDG3 Fund?*

For the grantees of the seventeen projects assessed in-depth, the evaluation found that for all but one (ASMA), both their institutional and financial sustainability was sufficient to good. This positive assessment is explained by the fact that the MDG3 Fund has financed the core business of the grantees, all well-established organisations or networks that have a diversified donor base.

The picture is different at the level of the implementing partners/beneficiary organisations, which were often seen as instrumental for achieving the project results. Here, institutional and financial sustainability remain weak. Sustainability is at risk at this level, especially when projects envisaged the integration of new themes and new methodologies into the core business of the implementing partner organisations. It is unlikely that the majority of the small NGOs and CBOs involved in the MDG3 projects will continue implementing the project interventions.



*16. Has the MDG3 Fund contributed to this capacity and if so how?*

The MDG3 Fund did not explicitly aim at enhancing the institutional and/or financial sustainability of the actors involved in the projects that it has financed. Still, for the more well-established grantees, the Fund was used at times to strengthen their resource mobilisation capacities which in turn enabled them to attract funding from other donors.

The evaluation finds that the MDG3 Fund's contribution to the sustainability of the small NGOs and CBOs involved in project implementation has been limited. This observation finds its origin in the absence of clear capacity development strategies in most projects, the short timeframe available for such capacity development as well as the persistent difficulties in getting access to finances.

*17. Have additional financial resources (private sector, other development partners) been identified and effectively tapped? If so, which and how?*

Initiatives at the level of the MDG3 Fund to obtain contributions from other donors – including the private sector – have met with little success. In the end, only the United Kingdom contributed a small amount through the Netherlands' ministry of Foreign Affairs.

At the level of the grantees, it is obvious that many of them have other donors contributing to the costs of their organisations and their projects – at times the MDG3 Fund has functioned as a leverage to access such funding. Though it was agreed with the *Schokland* partners that the MDG3 Fund would finance larger and well-established women

organisations and the Dutch NGOs would support smaller organisations, fourteen of the seventeen grantees from the sample also received funding and support from the main Dutch development NGOs between 2009 and 2011. However, these partnerships were not grasped as an opportunity for improving the M&E practices, or the organisational and institutional development of the grantees. In addition, donors like the UN Trust Fund against Violence Against Women and the Global Fund for Women have supported various MDG3 Fund grantees.

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# Reflection on the purpose, priorities and assumptions of the MDG3 Fund

This chapter provides a reflection at the level of the MDG3 Fund as a whole, in particular with respect to its purpose, design and underlying assumptions.

When it comes to financing women's organisations, it is clear the MDG3 Fund has proven its value. First of all, the importance of a specific fund for women and human rights organisations fighting for equal rights and opportunities for women and girls cannot be underestimated. Gender inequality is rampant and only changing slowly in many countries. Elsewhere, equality gains that the women's movement had fought for are seriously threatened. Moreover, it is evident that women themselves have a major role in the realisation of MDG3. Secondly, the evaluation makes clear that the MDG3 Fund came just at a time when the financial crisis was hitting and many of its grantees were facing hard times as other donors were reducing their funding for women's organisations. However, as the previous chapters have shown, it has at the same time been challenging to assess effectiveness, sustainability and efficiency of the different projects that were financed from the MDG3 Fund. These challenges go back to the way in which it was designed and the strategic choices that were made, in particularly in terms of setting the overall, generic framework, the Fund's underlying vision and theory of change, as well as the arrangements for M&E and management.

The lessons learned in this respect, relevant for future policies on the Dutch stand-alone track for supporting women's rights and gender equality, provide the basis for the paragraphs that follow.



### 1. *Keeping the policy framework broad or making strategic choices*

As is clear from the policy reconstruction in chapter 2, the policy framework developed for the MDG3 Fund was defined rather broadly as demonstrated by its objective: '*improvements of rights and opportunities for women and girls in developing countries*'. There were no clear-cut restrictions or preferences for strategies, approaches or eligible activities and target groups were defined in broad terms. The reasoning was that (i) gender equality issues, strategies and approaches were best to be identified and proposed by organisations themselves instead of imposed through a donor agenda; (ii) the Fund would attract a variety of larger and well-established organisations; and (iii) by keeping the framework as open as possible, innovative approaches were more likely to be presented.

While there is no doubt about the validity of the overall objective of the Fund, thought needs to be given to the strategies that can be pursued to realise it in the future. Ambition is needed, together with aspirational goals, to set the overall framework at the level of the Fund. At the same time, realism in setting milestones is called for, knowing that the realisation of equal rights and opportunities for women requires long-term and multi-dimensional processes, that are often non-linear and that exceed the usual three-year lifetime of such a fund. The contribution of the results of the individual projects to the Fund's overall objective was at times not well explained or not always evident.

When accepting this position, it can be considered that future projects are required to include the formulation of realistic and measurable targets and milestones. These should

be based on a theory of change that reasons how a contribution will be made to the longer-term objective of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and gender equality.

2. *Defining the added value of the Fund*

Regarding the assumption that the MDG3 Fund would finance larger and well-established women organisations whereas the main Dutch NGOs would support smaller organisations, the evaluation found that this was not the case. In the end, both the ministry of Foreign Affairs (through the MDG3 Fund) and the Dutch NGOs have often supported the same organisations. At the same time, the partnership between the Dutch NGO and the MDG3 Fund grantee was not seen as an opportunity to use this partnership for e.g. improving M&E practices or to address organisational and institutional development.[85] This points at the need for re-assessing the added value of any future fund in relation to what the Dutch NGOs are planning as part of their new partnerships with the ministry of Foreign Affairs.

3. *Paying attention for capacity development throughout the chain of organisations involved*

Over 50% of the MDG3 Fund grantees have re-granted part of their project budget. While the approach has resulted in a large number of smaller civil society and community-based organisations getting access to funds, effectiveness and sustainability were at stake. Moreover, it has left less space for investing in capacity development of the sub-grantees or in the build-up of sustainable networks. Much depended on the grantees themselves to address this issue. Against this background, a future fund calls for a strategy for strengthening these smaller organisations, for networking and linking local civil society and community-based organisations to international lobby and advocacy.



With the grants obtained, grantees have widened their scope and identified new themes, or they have experimented with new approaches, identified new target groups, and increased their outreach and/or added new countries. However, at times this was done without going through a proper preparation and identification process and without adjusting the accompanying management practices. These omissions help explain the mixed results in terms of effectiveness and efficiency, including the relatively high overhead. This calls for (i) the formulation of realistic targets and a clear trajectory for institutional development as well as organisational development[86]; (ii) clarification of the role of the grantees in supporting their partners and implementing organisations in these areas – and better monitoring of their performance in this respect; and (iii) to provide space and finances for investing in organisational and institutional development at fund level.

[85] This does not implicate that all grantees of a fund needs to have a link with Dutch NGOs. Other actors can provide support to grantees.

[86] Organisational development focuses on capacity development of the organisation (organisational procedures, systems, technical capacities and know-how); institutional strengthening focuses on strengthening of networking, lobby and advocacy capacities.

### 4. *Changing from output to outcome oriented approach*

Improving gender equality requires long-term processes that envisage normative and structural changes. This asks for holistic approaches and a vision on the importance of local women's organisations, how to strengthen them and how to link local-to-global and global-to-local lobby and advocacy. It also requires a timeframe which goes beyond the MDG3 Fund's three years and which allows grantees to implement international projects involving partners in multiple countries. This is especially important since, in practice, the time for implementing country-level project activities was often less than the duration of the contracts with the MDG3 Fund grantees; sometimes as little as one year or a few months was available. What is more, attention needs to be given to secure funding after the Fund has stopped (providing a phasing out, providing a follow-up of the Fund and/or facilitating resource mobilisation of the grantees).

Though most MDG3 Fund projects intervened on a combination of the Fund's priority themes, they were often one-dimensional and did not sufficiently combine (or collaborated with) interventions aiming at economic and political empowerment, addressing social norms and formal and structural changes. At the level of these projects, as well as the level of the MDG3 Fund as a whole, a clear vision on the strengthening of women civil society organisations and networking was absent, with a risk that these networks were created just for the sake of attracting donor funding. At both levels, while focusing on producing concrete outputs, little attention was paid to the broader context in which these networks operate and the process of building their internal cohesion and organisational and political capacity.



An outcome oriented approach, identifying outcome as milestones in achieving more gender equality, most probably will require the grantees in making their theory of change more explicit, justifying why to intervene in a certain country and what can be achieved in a certain context by identifying opportunities and drivers for change. Evidently a more limited number of intervention countries (to be chosen by the grantees) would be recommended, unless efficient management of multi-country programmes can be demonstrated. Outcome needs to be formulated taking into account the time span of a certain project.

### 5. *Monitoring 'light' versus strategic monitoring and evaluation*

Monitoring and evaluation of the MDG3 Fund projects was to be based upon the grantees' existing M&E frameworks and systems. These were verified during the project appraisal process, but were not a decisive factor in the assessment. Even more, in line with what was agreed in Paris (2005) and Accra (2008) on alignment and ownership, no monitoring framework was imposed. While the assumption was that these existing M&E systems would be sufficiently sound, in practice it appeared that monitoring was mainly done at activity level. Only few grantees used M&E systems with tools and approaches capable of collecting and analysing reliable data at output and outcome level, in particular when dealing with social change processes.

Also at the level of the MDG3 Fund as a whole a sound monitoring system was lacking, following the implementation of the strategic choices made such as: learning from innovative approaches, results achieved in movement building, leverage effect on accessing donor funding, influence on the international donor agenda regarding MDG3, target groups reached, etc. This lack of good and reliable M&E data at the level of the grantees and at the level of the Fund complicated the identification of lessons learnt and the process of gaining insight into what works and what does not and has made it difficult to use the learning potential of the Fund – also with respect to M&E.

For future initiatives, it clearly remains a challenge to find a balance between respecting endogenous M&E frameworks and systems and the need for strategic monitoring and ensuring an appropriate level of accountability for this kind of Fund. This balancing act requires that more attention be paid to setting realistic and measurable targets and milestones that are based on realistic theory of change and go beyond the level of immediate outputs. Secondly, there is a need to pay closer attention to the M&E capabilities and practices of the grantees of such a Fund and to build in the possibility to strengthen these – through individual training and mentoring as well as joint-learning – as one of the Fund's strategic features.



### *6. Sourcing out versus keeping management internal*

It was a deliberate choice to outsource the management of the MDG3 Fund, based on good experiences in the past, the workload that the management of such a Fund implied and the decreasing capacity at the Ministry at that time. While the decision is understandable, and Fund management was done in accordance with the contract between the ministry of Foreign Affairs and PwC and Femconsult, outsourcing has had repercussions in terms of: (i) hampering the development of a knowledge base and analytical skills within the ministry in the field of women's rights and gender equality, especially regarding the knowledge of experiences, endeavours and analyses of success and failure in this domain; (ii) making it more difficult for the ministry to further develop its relationships and networks with the international women's movement as all contact regarding the MDG3 Fund went via PwC and Femconsult; and (iii) the limited use that was made of knowledge and networks existing within the Ministry once the appraisal process was completed. The latter point does not only concern the ministry in The Hague but also the Netherlands embassies: since the embassies in the countries visited had no or limited knowledge of activities or organisations financed from the MDG3 Fund, there was no collaboration possible, even though at times this could have contributed to enhanced effectiveness and sustainability of the interventions.

# Annexes

# Annex 1 About IOB

## Objectives

The remit of the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) is to increase insight into the implementation and effects of Dutch foreign policy. IOB meets the need for the independent evaluation of policy and operations in all the policy fields of the Homogenous Budget for International Cooperation (HGIS). IOB also advises on the planning and implementation of evaluations that are the responsibility of policy departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and embassies of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Its evaluations enable the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation to account to parliament for policy and the allocation of resources. In addition, the evaluations aim to derive lessons for the future. To this end, efforts are made to incorporate the findings of evaluations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' policy cycle. Evaluation reports are used to provide targeted feedback, with a view to improving the formulation and implementation of policy. Insight into the outcomes of implemented policies allows policymakers to devise measures that are more effective and focused.



## Organisation and quality assurance

IOB has a staff of experienced evaluators and its own budget. When carrying out evaluations it calls on assistance from external experts with specialised knowledge of the topic under investigation. To monitor the quality of its evaluations IOB sets up a reference group for each evaluation, which includes not only external experts but also interested parties from within the ministry and other stakeholders. In addition, an Advisory Panel of four independent experts provides feedback and advice on the usefulness and use made of evaluations. The panel's reports are made publicly available and also address topics requested by the ministry or selected by the panel.

## Programming of evaluations

IOB consults with the policy departments to draw up a ministry-wide evaluation programme. This rolling multi-annual programme is adjusted annually and included in the Explanatory Memorandum to the ministry's budget. IOB bears final responsibility for the programming of evaluations in development cooperation and advises on the programming of foreign policy evaluations. The themes for evaluation are arrived at in response to requests from parliament and from the ministry, or are selected because they are issues of societal concern. IOB actively coordinates its evaluation programming with that of other donors and development organisations.

## Approach and methodology

Initially IOB's activities took the form of separate project evaluations for the Minister for Development Cooperation. Since 1985, evaluations have become more comprehensive, covering sectors, themes and countries. Moreover, since then, IOB's reports have been submitted to parliament, thus entering the public domain. The review of foreign policy and

a reorganisation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1996 resulted in IOB's remit being extended to cover the entire foreign policy of the Dutch government. In recent years it has extended its partnerships with similar departments in other countries, for instance through joint evaluations and evaluative activities undertaken under the auspices of the OECD-DAC Network on Development Evaluation.

IOB has continuously expanded its methodological repertoire. More emphasis is now given to robust impact evaluations implemented through an approach in which both quantitative and qualitative methods are applied. IOB also undertakes policy reviews as a type of evaluation. Finally, it conducts systematic reviews of available evaluative and research material relating to priority policy areas.

# Annex 2 Summary Terms of Reference

The evaluation of the MDG3 Fund is one of the building blocks for IOB's overall gender equality policy evaluation. The objective of the evaluation of the MDG3 Fund is see whether it has realised its specific aim, i.e. 'to bring about improvements in gender equality and to empower women, with the focus on securing property and inheritance rights for women, promoting employment and equal employment opportunities, increasing women's participation in politics and public administration and stopping violence against women'. Based on the findings of the evaluation, a second objective will be to draw lessons that may be relevant to future policy and policy implementation.

### Evaluation questions

The evaluation of the MDG3 Fund aims to answer the following questions, using the approach outlined below.

1. What are the key characteristics of the MDG3 Fund portfolio?

This will cover inter alia: geographical spread and thematic coverage of the supported interventions; main issues addressed; organisations involved in financing and/or implementation (including organisations that have received funding through re-granting of the MDG3 Fund subsidy); beneficiaries (intermediate organisations, final beneficiaries); MDG3 Fund financial data and distribution of resources + other financial resources received by beneficiary organisations; types of activities financed; differences between what was planned and what was reported to have been realised; etc. The inventory will use the outcomes of a mid-term review that was conducted in 2010 and will be based on the files of the 45 projects funded. Where needed, semi-structured interviews will complement the document review (face-to-face, telephone or other means).



Based on this overall inventory, an in-depth study of the files of a selection of 15 projects will be carried out. Suggested selection criteria are: (a) the projects cover the four priority themes; (b) they include single and multiple issue organisations; (c) they include funding organisations (i.e. organisations that provided grants to others) and implementing organisations; (d) cover various regions; (e) are of different size, both big and small projects; and (f) include attention for capacity building. The sample also includes two organisations that have conducted a baseline study (CREA and Breakthrough). Based on the desk study, a set of common indicators (theme specific) for further assessment will be drawn up. All available project evaluations will be collected and reviewed. Comprehensive desk study will be undertaken of these 15 projects. When needed, additional information will be collected on the final beneficiary organisations. Desk study will be followed by a series of semi-structured interviews, either face-to-face (institutions based in the Netherlands) or by telephone/conference call for institutions elsewhere. As a third element, a limited number of visits is foreseen to countries that are covered by one or several of the above 15 projects. These visits aim to validate findings from the desk study and collect

information on e.g. actual outcomes and beneficiaries, aspects of organisational strengthening, sustainability, cooperation and management issues.

Desk study and country visits aim to address the following evaluation questions:

*Effectiveness*

2. What were the main/common problems that were addressed by the projects in the MDG3 Fund's four priority areas?
3. What were the strategies behind these interventions financed and were they relevant for addressing these problems?
4. What were the intended immediate and/or final target groups of the projects and what are their main characteristics? What was their role in project design and implementation (participants, beneficiaries, ...)?
5. Were the activities that were foreseen implemented as planned? Were the intended target groups effectively reached? If so, how, if not what were the reasons?
6. What were the main external factors affecting/facilitating these realisations? Has there been any coordination with similar interventions and organisations at country level?

*Outcome*



7. To what extent have the targeted organisations and women been able to effectively use the resources (knowledge, skills, advocacy, ...) made available from the MDG3 Fund?
8. What benefits has this brought to them at individual and/or household level and/or organisational level?
9. Have there been measurable changes in terms of women's independence and control over resources and can these be attributed or contributed to the MDG3 Fund supported interventions?
10. Did the interventions contribute to advancing gender equality at (a) the level of the individual (economic-, social-, political equality, bodily integrity); and/or (b) the collective level and/or the enabling environment (laws, services)?
11. How relevant was the strategy of organisation/networking, capacity development, lobbying and advocacy for the empowerment of women concerned and the attainment of gender equality?

*Efficiency*

12. At the level of the individual organisations, what were the resources available from the MDG3 Fund and to what extent were these mixed with and/or replaced other funding?
13. What inputs were financed by the projects and how efficient have the beneficiary organisations been in making use of those resources?
14. How were the projects managed and has there been any voice of the final beneficiary organisations and women?

*Sustainability*

15. What is the institutional and financial capacity and the commitment of grantees and implementing partner organisations to continue the activities financed under the MDG3 Fund?
16. Has the MDG3 Fund contributed to this capacity and if so how?
17. Have additional financial resources (private sector, other development partners) been identified and effectively tapped? If so, which and how?

## Approach

The following research instruments will be used for answering the above questions:

- Desk study - this concerns, as mentioned above, (a) documentation on the different projects, including: applications, assessment, activity appraisal document, progress and financial reports, final reports, reports on the management contractor's monitoring missions, available evaluation reports; (b) documentation on the MDG3 Fund, including the review of 2010.
- Semi structured interviews (by telephone/teleconferencing/Skype) with staff of: (a) the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; (b) the organisations contracted for the different projects and of final beneficiary organisations; (c) the administrator of the MDG3 Fund.
- Short country visits - to validate and crosscheck the information obtained. Country visits will entail: (a) semi-structured interviews with a representative group of staff of the organisations contracted for the implementation of the selected projects and representatives of implementing organisations (when different) in selected countries; (b) focus group sessions with women (and men as appropriate) who have participated in and/or benefited from the activities organised; and (c) interviews with other stakeholders (e.g. other NGOs, Dutch embassies, etc.) as appropriate.



Since supported projects and programmes have often included capacity building elements - in addition to making resources available for expanding service delivery - the hypothesis is that there is a results chain whereby inputs funded to enhance capabilities will affect the outputs of the organisations and ultimately the outcomes at the level of their beneficiaries or constituencies. With this focus on capacity building, elements of the 5-C approach will be used.

## Organisation and quality control

Implementation of the evaluation is the responsibility of IOB. External expertise will be contracted to support IOB's work. Internal quality control and peer review of draft reports will be ensured by IOB. External quality control will be ensured by the reference group established for external quality control of IOB's overall gender equality policy evaluation.

# Annex 3 Evaluation framework

| **1. To what extent were the MDG3 Fund projects relevant?** | |
|---|---|
| Relevance refers to the extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor (OECD/DAC) | |
| *Sub questions* | *Indicators* |
| Relevance of the strategy for addressing the problem | Coherence of the intervention logic (activities, output, outcome)<br>Coherence of intervention with national policy<br>Intervention responds to the needs of the beneficiaries (check participation of immediate and final beneficiaries in project design and implementation)<br>Coherence with the objectives and strategies of the implementing organisations |
| *Sources:* MDG3 Fund project proposals, assessment memorandums, reports; interviews with stakeholders | |



| **2. To what extent were the MDG3 Fund projects effective - output level?** | |
|---|---|
| Effectiveness measures the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives or is likely to do so In evaluating the effectiveness of a programme or project; it is moreover useful to pay attention to the main factors that have influenced the (non) achievement of these objectives. In terms of effectiveness, two levels are distinguished: output and outcome. This section focuses on output level. Given the great diversity among the MDG3 Fund projects, a generic intervention logic for each priority theme of the MDG3 Fund will be reconstructed. This will make it possible to systematically identify the different categories of outputs (and henceforth also outcomes).<br>A distinction is made between projects involved in policy influencing, lobby and advocacy and projects that are not. The following output categories will be used:<br><br>• For the lobby and advocacy projects a description and analysis of: (i) immediate output in terms of enhanced civic engagement, improved knowledge and/or research results available, and strengthened freedom of expression; (ii) the contributions made to improved advising, advocacy, lobbying and activism<br>• For other type of interventions, i.e. mostly focusing on improved service delivery or direct support to specific target groups, an assessment of the extent to which service delivery was improved (in terms of quality and access) or a description of the nature of individual cases supported and assess its effectiveness. | |
| *Sub questions* | *Indicators* |
| 2.1 Description of the main outputs realised | Changes in one or several output categories (civic engagement, knowledge, research, freedom of expression, improved service delivery, individual cases supported);<br>Realisation degree vs planning |

| 2. To what extent were the MDG3 Fund projects effective - output level? | |
|---|---|
| 2.2 Target group reached (numbers and intended groups): immediate target groups | Comparison between intended target group and target group reached in terms of numbers and characteristics of the target groups<br>Appreciation of the estimated outreach |
| 2.3 Coordination with similar interventions and organisations within the country | Level of coordination and linkages with other networks, cooperation, joint action, etc.) |
| 2.4. Effective lobbying and advocacy strategies implemented | Improved advice and/or improved advocacy and/or improved lobby and/or improved activism |
| Identification and analysis of external and internal factors affecting realisation | |
| *Sources:* Project proposals; Progress, final assessment and evaluation reports; interviews with MDG3 Fund grantees and implementing organisations | |

| 3. To what extent were the MDG3 Fund projects effective - outcome level? | |
|---|---|
| This section addresses the 'outcome' sub-questions from the ToR and builds upon the findings under (2) above. To situate results and outcomes, a generic result chain is developed for each of the four priority themes of the MDG3 Fund. These take into account the main characteristics of the projects financed as well as the study of Dekker (2012) and are based on the approach developed by the Commissie Vrouw en Ontwikkeling (2007) which dissects the concept of 'empowerment' into: Economical power (to have) - power to; Power of knowledge (to know) - power to; Internal power (to want) - power within and Socio-political power (to be able) - power with. The preliminary finding that limited information is available on what has happened as a result of project interventions implies that the evaluation is unable to deal with impact. Following Dekker (2012) a distinction will be made between intermediate and longer-term outcomes. For immediate outcome we want to assess to what extent interventions have contributed to (a) en enabling environment for gender equality and (b) empowerment of women. | |
| *Sub questions* | *Indicators* |
| 3.1 Target group reached (numbers and intended groups): final target groups | Comparison between intended target group and target group reached in terms of numbers and characteristics of the target groups plus an appreciation of the estimated outreach |
| 3.2 changes in the enabling environment | Formal changes: legislation; Informal changes: norms, values, attitudes; Stronger institutions, community structures, public agencies to defend women's rights; Improved service delivery |
| 3.3 Changes regarding empowerment at individual land collective level, with attention to access and control | Power to: economic power (to have) and power of knowledge (know how); Power within: internal power (to want); Power with: socio-political power (to be able) |
| External factors influencing the results | |
| Level of attribution/contribution | |
| *Sources:* Evaluation reports; Final assessment reports; Field visits: focus group discussions, interviews stakeholders, analysis of official data (statistics) | |

| 4. To what extent the MDG3 Fund projects were implemented in an efficient manner? | |
|---|---|
| Efficiency measures the qualitative and quantitative outputs against the inputs (OECD/DAC). Neither a cost benefit analysis nor a comparison with alternative approaches, costs, etc. will be undertaken. The evaluation will limit itself to the following aspects: (i) level of MDG3 Fund contribution to the organisations and inputs financed; (ii) project management and (iii) re-granting approaches used at project level. In terms of inputs, a distinction is made between: (i) Economic input: credit, techniques, land, infrastructure, transport, etc. ; (ii) Human input: education, training, support, coaching, mentoring, exchange visits, etc. and (iii) Socio-political input: support to organisations, setting up of structures, platforms, forums, networks, lobby and advocacy. | |
| *Sub questions* | *Indicators* |
| 4.1 Share of the MDG3 Fund , own contribution, other donors | Actual numbers and % (related to the specific project); Names of other donors; Funding of new activities and/or of the core business of the implementing organisations |
| 4.2 Inputs financed | Coherence between inputs, output and ambitions (qualitative description; reflect on use of available resources by beneficiary organisations); Project overhead (including description and share of project budget); Estimation of share of different types of inputs as defined above; Degree of project realisation. |
| 4.3 Management of projects and MDG3 Fund | M&E system informing management of the project: appreciation of the M&E; Overall MDG3 Fund management in relation to management contract |
| 4.4 Re-granting approach (only MDG3 Fund) | Amount of budget re-granted (number and %); Procedures used; Number and types of beneficiary organisations; Amount of grant per organisation; Overhead implications |
| Factors influencing efficiency of the project | |
| *Sources:* Project proposals; Project assessment and organisational assessment forms; Interviews with MDG3 Fund grantees; Field visits | |

| 5. To what extent are the MDG3 Fund projects sustainable? | |
|---|---|
| Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn (OECD/DAC). Different levels of sustainability will be addressed, i.e. institutional, financial and socio-cultural sustainability. The evaluation will not deal with environmental sustainability. The evaluation will assess the contribution made to capacity development of MDG3 grantees and their partners. Using Morgan's 5-C model, the evaluation pays particular attention to the following main topics: Enhanced visibility, legitimacy of the applicant (capability to commit and act); Enhanced networking and attracting other donors (capability to relate); Access to new target groups, new themes (capability to deliver) | |
| *Sub questions* | *Indicators* |
| 5.1 Institutional sustainability of the programme results | At the level of the MDG3 Fund grantees and their partners: Human resources to continue project activities; Overall organisational capacity to continue project activities |
| 5.2 Financial sustainability of the project | At the level of the MDG3 Fund grantees and their partners: Diversification of sources of income |
| 5.3 Socio-cultural sustainability of programme results | Evidence that changes at individual, organisational, community or national level will sustain taking into account changes in norms, beliefs, values, attitude |
| 5.4 Contribution of the MDG3 Fund to capacity development of the applicant and/or re-granted organisation | Enhanced visibility, legitimacy of the applicant (capability to commit and act); Enhanced networking and attracting new sources of funding (capability to relate); Access to new target groups, new themes (capability to deliver); Other changes in 5 core capabilities of the MDG grantees |
| Internal and external factors influencing sustainability | |
| *Sources:* Project proposals and assessment forms; Final assessment reports; Interviews and field visits | |

# Annex 4 List of documents consulted

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In addition, the following documents per were consulted for each project included in the sample:

*MDG3 Fund grantees:*

- Annual reports
- Application form
- Appraisal memorandum
- Assessment form final report
- AWID questionnaire form
- Final report
- Financial reports and audit reports
- Partnership agreements with implementing organisations
- Progress reports and activity sheets

*MDG3 Fund implementing partner organisations:*

- Action plans and proposals
- Activity sheets
- Annual and semi-annual reports
- Budgets and financial reports
- Technical reports and research proposals

# Annex 5 List of interviewees

## Management of the MDG3 Fund

| | |
|---|---|
| Robert Dijksterhuis | Former head of the Emancipation Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Ineke van de Pol | Former staff member of the Emancipation Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Irma van Dueren | Taskforce Women's Rights and Gender Equality, Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| Frieso Wiegman | PwC |
| Anne Marije Maters | PwC |
| Kitty Bentvelsen | Femconsult |
| Joke Manders | Femconsult |
| Ellen Sprenger | External consultant, member of the appraisal commission |

## Field visits

*Egypt*

| | |
|---|---|
| Catherine Harrington | Senior Program Officer for Advocacy & Communications at WLP |
| Farida El Nakkash | President FWID (implementing partner WLP) |
| Enas El Shafai | Executive Director FWID |
| Mai Khaled | Staff member FWID |
| Noha El Sawi | Staff member FWID |
| Naglaa Kadri | Staff member responsible for Social Media and WLP project Coordinator |
| Sheam El Shafai | Volunteer (trained by WLP project) |
| Sarah Vaill | Director International Advocacy and Planning V-Day Karama (via Skype) |
| Hibaaq Osman | Founder and CEO of V-Day Karama |
| Marwa Morsy | CFO of V-Day Karama |
| Ashgan Farag | Director of Egypt Programs of V-Day Karama |
| Mayada Morsy | Program Officer of V-Day Karama |
| Haidy Moustafa | Program Assistant of V-Day Karama |
| Maya Morsy | UNDP, formerly UN Women |
| Fatema Khafagy | AAW, Ombudsman Office, gender |
| Afaf Marie | Egyptian Association for Community Participation Enhancement (EACPE), Economic realm coordinator (supported by V-Day Karama) |
| Dr. Magdy Abdel Hamid | Head of board (EACPE) |
| Azza Kamel | ACT (Communication Techniques for Development), Media realm coordinator (supported by V-Day Karama) |
| Fathi Farid | Collaborator/crew film production (ACT) |
| Magda Adly | Director of El Nadeem |
| Afaf Said | Director of Heya Foundation, Arts & Culture realm coordinator (supported by V-Day Karama) |

| | |
|---|---|
| Nada Abdallah | Artist and member Arts & Culture realm |
| Hala Abdelgader | Director of the Egyptian Foundation for Family Development, Law realm coordinator (supported by V-Day Karama) |
| Saneh Thanaa | Project manager Egyptian Foundation for Family Development, member Law realm |
| Azza Farghali | Legal advisor, Egyptian Foundation for Family Development, member Law realm |
| Aida Nour El Din | President of Women and Development, Alexandria, implementing partners of V-Day Karama |
| Mariam Ali Salem | Secretary-General of Woman And Development, Alexandria |
| Akram Suliman | Major from the Ministry of Interior, Dept. of Human Rights, Alexandria |
| Ikram and Hoda | Two beneficiaries of Woman and Development (Female) |
| Sihaam Shukri | Beneficiary of Egyptian Foundation for Family Development (teacher of literacy classes and trainer for legal support) |

Interviews with beneficiaries of Egyptian Foundation for Family Development

*Bangladesh*



| | |
|---|---|
| Prof. Sabina Fiaz Rashid | Dean, James P. Grant School of Public Health, implementing partner CREA |
| Sunita Kujur | Senior programme officer, CREA India (via Skype) |
| Mr. M.B. Akther | Program manager Oxfam GB |
| Mr. Zinat Ara | National Coordinator We Can |
| Advocate Sultana Kamal | Executive Director ASK and Chairperson of We Can alliance |
| Suraiaya Akhter Gender | Justice and Good Governance department of Polishree, implementing partner We Can campaign in Dinajpur |
| MD. Salim Reza | Manager Livelihood and food security Polishree, Dinajpur |
| Naheed Sultana | Project coordinator Nari Maitree, implementing We Can in Dhaka |
| Masuda Begum | Director Health Nari Maitree and project coordinator |
| Prof. Dr. Arefin Siddique | Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University, involved in We Can campaign |
| Selina Ahmed | Executive director ASF (ASF involved in the national We Can alliance) |
| Farina Ahmed | Head of Programs ASF (ASF involved in the national We Can alliance) |
| Ranjan Karmaker | Executive director STEPS (STEPS involved in national We Can alliance) |
| Rekha Saha | Director STEPS (STEPS involved in national We Can alliance) |
| Monjusree Saha | Head of programme coordination RDRS (RDRS involved in national We Can alliance) |

Group interview with project coordinators, financial manager, M&E manager of Polishree, Dinajpur and 15 members of the We Can District Alliance of Dinajpur

Management Committee of We Can Secretariat (4 staff, programme facilitator, campaign facilitator, training coordinator, program officer)

4 Members of the national Comittee of We Can

Group discussions with Change makers
- Change Makers Group from Dinajpur (married women group), with acid attack survivors
- Change makers group (adolescent girls group) in Dinjapur
- Change makers group young adolescents, Dhaka
- 4 Change makers from Dhaka

*Mozambique*

| | |
|---|---|
| Aboobakar Covela | National Partnerships, Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator – ActionAid Mozambique |
| Márcia Cossa | Economic Alternatives Coordinator – ActionAid Mozambique |
| Eugénio Muianga | Programme Officer – ActionAid Mozambique |
| Egidio Vaz Raposo | Wageindicator Mozambique country coordinator (via Skype) |
| Cesta Ernesto Chiteleca | Previous gender coordinator /women workers' representative – OTM |
| Clara Munguambe | Member of the women's union / coordinator for gender – OTM |
| Damião Simango | Youth representative / coordinator for youth committee – OTM |
| Antonio Paónde | Head of international affairs department – OTM |
| Paulien Osse | Executive director of the Wage Indicator Foundation (via telephone) |
| Maria Tsirantonaki | Project coordinator – ITUC (via telephone) |
| Rafa Machava | Director of Associação Mulher, Lei e Desenvolvimento (Muleide), (implementing partner of Safaids) |
| Irene Cossa | Coordinator Associação Kindlimuka (implementing partner of Safaids) |
| Flávia Vilanculos | Conselheira of Associação Kindlimuka (implementing partner of Safaids) |
| Eulália Ofumane | President Associação das Mulheres Moçambicanas de Carrera Jurídica (implementing partner of Safaids) |
| Bela Liture | Associação das Mulheres Moçambicanas de Carrera Jurídica (implementing partner of Safaids) |
| Mateus Mapinde | Officer of Magariro, Associação para o Desenvolvimento Comunitário (implementing partner of Safaids, via Skype) |

Focus group discussion with members of three farmers' associations and/or cooperatives.

## Other MDG3 Fund related interviews

| | |
|---|---|
| Monica Novillo | Director ACM |
| Ruth Ojiambo Ochieng | Executive director Isis-WICCE |
| Sarah Mukasa | Director of programmes AWDF |
| Zeytuna Abdella Azasoo | M&E officer AWDF |
| Sofia Trevino | WIEGO project coordinator |
| Sri Husnaini Sofjan | Huairou Commission |
| Sandy Schilen | Strategic director Huairou Commission |

# Annex 6 Basic information on the sample of assessed projects

| Grantee | Project title | Project aims | Countries | Total grant in EUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) | Leadership, Innovation and Scaling Up: Strengthening the Capacity of African Women's Organisations and Movements. | Reaching women all over Africa with regard to decreasing violence against women and enhancing political participation by grant-giving to 150-180 women's organisations, strengthening them and building their capacity, and building networks. | Burkina, Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe | 5,565,397 |
| American Society for Muslim Advancement (ASMA) | Women's Islamic Initiative in Spirituality and Equity (WISE) Compact Program | To provide: (a) a global infrastructure for shared work among Muslim women's groups, organisations, institutions, and networks, (b) religious context for Muslim women's dialogue about, and advocacy for, their rights, (c) an institutional voice for gender equality, and (d) accessible knowledge about effective ways to promote the equitable ethic of Islam. | Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Jordan, Pakistan, Palestinian Territories, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, Somalia | 1,000,000 |
| Breakthrough Trust | Promoting Action against Discrimination, Abuse, and Violence – PADAV – the Stopping Point. | Counter gender based violence by addressing root causes and responding to consequences of violence. The project will focus on creating community awareness through the media, trainings and production of education/information material, social mapping of communities, development of community plans, and partner/network identification. | India | 920,526 |
| Creating Resources for Empowerment in Action (CREA) | Count Me In!: Addressing Violence Against Women in South and Central Asia | Address gender inequalities which lead to violence against women, gaps in education, health and employment, and the preference for sons over daughters in South Asia. The project will offer a grassroot leadership building programme, a research programme, and an advocacy programme. | Bangladesh, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal, Pakistan | 1,205,335 |

| Grantee | Project title | Project aims | Countries | Total grant in EUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender Links | Making Links for Gender Equality in Southern Africa | Achieving employment equality in the media, at increasing women's participation in parliament and local government and to combat violence against women. The activities will mainly be at policy level and include the development of action and strategy plans, workshops, trainings, and media campaigns. | Angola, Botswana, DRC, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe | 1,724,730 |
| Huairou Commission, Women, Housing & Community | Grounding MDG3: Centre-Staging Grassroots Women in Realizing MDG3 | Scale up the leadership of grassroot women in decision making, increase political participation in development and securing land and housing. The project includes organising meetings and training grassroot leaders in order to link MDGs to community development issues. | Global | 1,397,994 |
| International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) | Decisions for life | Promote formal and equal employment for adolescent women who are participating or seeking work in the labour market. Activities include, amongst others; salary checks, trade union campaigns including face-to-face meetings and training sessions, and dissemination of materials. | Angola, Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Brazil, Bosnia Herzegovina, Belarus, Ukraine, Azerbaijan | 4,972,930 |
| Isis-Women's International Cross Cultural Exchange (Isis-WICCE) | Combating violence against women | Improve conditions, services, and opportunities for women and girls in situations of armed conflict. The interventions seek, amongst others: to increase competencies of women leaders in peace building and conflict resolution practices, to increase women's participating in decision making in the post conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation in the 2 target societies, and to address the needs of war affected women and girls. | South Sudan, Liberia | 1,150,000 |

| Grantee | Project title | Project aims | Countries | Total grant in EUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NIZA) | Women's Land Rights in Southern Africa | Improve rights and opportunities for women with respect to control over and ownership of land, leading to more gender equality and empowerment of women by fact finding, training & sensitization, advocacy, supporting women farmers' networks, working through media, and providing small funds for grassroot initiatives of women farmers' associations and rural women's network | Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe | 3,192,900 |
| Oxfam Great Britain | We Can End Violence Against Women Campaign, South Asia | Eliminate violence against women at all levels in society through preventing violence by eradicating existing attitudes and patriarchal values. The aim is to engage and commit individuals and organisations in South Asia which will form a constituency of 'change makers'. These individuals and organisations will be reached by public events and distributing communication materials. | Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka | 2,299,514 |
| Southern Africa AIDS Information Services (SAfAIDS) | Confronting Cultural Practises: Beliefs and Customary Laws to Promote Gender Equality and Prevent Gender Based Violence against Women and Girls in Southern Africa | Addresses gender-based violence and enhancing sexual and reproductive rights for women and girls by developing capacity building materials, organising meetings, and providing conduct training. | Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, Zimbabwe | 2,740,800 |
| Urgent Action Fund-Africa (UAF-Africa) | Protecting and Supporting Women Human Rights Defenders Through Rapid Response Grant Making, Collaborative Initiatives, Research and Advocacy | Empowerment of women living in DAC countries by protecting and supporting women human rights defenders (WHRDs) in their work to realise equality of girls and women, particularly in conflict-affected environments. Through rapid response grant making, collaborative initiatives, research and advocacy, the UAF will enable WHRDs to undertake time-sensitive and strategic interventions that advance the human rights of women and girls in various contexts. | Global | 1,147,083 |

| Grantee | Project title | Project aims | Countries | Total grant in EUR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| V-Day Karama | KARAMA – Building Constituencies and Arab Women's Leadership | Reduce violence against women and to increase the participation of women in the public sphere through a regional Arab women's movement. Marginalised women (including refugees and stateless women) and women and girls living in conflict situations in the project countries will be reached through organising meetings and developing action plans. The projects goal is to reduce violence against women and to increase the participation of women in the public sphere through a regional Arab women's movement. Marginalised women (including refugees and stateless women) and women and girls living in conflict situations in the project countries will be reached through organising meetings and developing action plans. | Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian Territories, Syria | 2,095,000 |
| West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) | Strengthening African Women Peace Move-ment Through Active Non-violence | Build the capacity of African women in conflict resolution, lobbying and advocacy, leadership skills, and working with international instruments such as UN SC Resolution 1325. Next to knowledge and skills building, the capacity building activities will also aim at increas-ing participants' assertiveness and confidence to stand up for their rights and vie for representation in public and political positions, in order for them to effectively influence political decisions and engage in conflict resolution and transformation. | Africa | 1,410,335 |
| Women in Informal Employment: Globalisation and Organizing (WIEGO) | Investing in Equality for Working Poor Women | Improve the situation of female informal workers in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, Central Europe, and Eastern Europe through unification, lobbying, advocacy, networking, sharing of information and experiences, and improvement of international labour laws, using an existing network of women's organisations worldwide. | Global | 1,725,000 |
| Women's Learning Partnership for Rights Devel-opment and Peace (WLP) | Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women in Muslim Majority Societies | The specific objectives of this project are: to increase the number of women in the partnership countries in leadership and decision-making roles in politics, to expand and intensify advocacy campaigns for legal reform to eliminate violence against women, especially honour killing, polygamy and child marriage, and to strengthen the organisational and financial capacity of partner organisations to bolster feminist movements, exchange knowledge and strategy, and bring into the political process marginalised and hitherto silent moderate women. | Turkey, Palestina, Pakistan, Malaysia, Lebanon, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Jordan, Iran, Afghanistan, Cameroon, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco, Nigeria | 1,287,500 |

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Cover photo: Change makers from Oxfam UK's We Can End Violence Against Women Campaign attend a weekly meeting in the village of Dinajpur, Bangladesh | G. M. B. Akash / Panos

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Following the Schokland agreements of 2007, the Netherlands' Government set up a special Fund to speed up the achievement of MDG3: promoting gender equality and empowering women. The MDG3 Fund, with a budget of EUR 77 million, became operational in 2008 and lasted until 2011. Its aim was to realise concrete improvements in rights and opportunities for women and girls in developing countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. The Fund has financed 45 projects in the areas of combating violence against women, improving women's political participation, equal opportunities on the labour market and property rights for women. These projects were implemented by a broad range of civil society organisations, media, universities and research institutions. This evaluation informs on how the Fund was put into practice and what results have been achieved.

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